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THE
PROTESTANT DOCTRINE
OF
THE LORD'S SUPPER

A STUDY IN THE EUCHARISTIC TEACHING OF LUTHER
ZWINGLI AND CALVIN

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TO THE MEMORY
OF
MY MOTHER



Sir

PREFACE

THE three chief protagonists of the early Protestant doctrine of the Lord's Supper were Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin, and there is no lack of French and German text-books expounding their Eucharistic teaching. The present work aims at providing a similar exposition for English students. The writings of the three Reformers are studied in their chronological order, and an attempt is made to bring out the points at issue between Luther and Zwingli which led to the Colloquy of Marburg (1529). The author is convinced that the Sacramental teaching of Zwingli is much richer than is generally acknowledged, and he denies that the Zurich Reformer taught a doctrine of "mere commemoration." It is well known that Calvin formulated his theory independently. On the other hand, it is now generally accepted that teaching similar to that which he propounded was already prevalent in the Eucharistic works of Melancthon, Oekolampadius, Bucer, and Brenz. Modern research has also proved that the roots of Calvin's mediating testimony are to be found in such documents as the Swabian Syngramma (1525), the Tetrapolitan Confession (1530), the Wittenberg Concordia (1536), and the Pre-Calvin Swiss Confessions. It has also to be remembered that for some years Calvin was a Minister of the Church of the Augsburg Confession in Strasbourg, and that Luther rather commended than disapproved his teaching. On the other hand, Calvin was nearly related to Zwingli in his views, and with Zwingli's successor in Zurich he formulated the Consensus Tigurinus in 1549. While then in these latter days, Lutheran, Zwinglian, and Calvinist differ widely in their Eucharistic doctrine, such divergences were not so marked in those whom they acknowledge as their spiritual fathers, for in their essential teaching on the Holy Supper, Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin were as one.



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CHAPTER I

THE SACRAMENTS

The Roman Catholic Doctrine of the Sacraments at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century—Luther's Doctrine of the Sacraments—Zwingli's Doctrine of the Sacraments—Calvin's Doctrine of the Sacraments.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE SACRAMENTS

FOR a right understanding of the Protestant teaching on the Lord's Supper, it is essential to take a preliminary survey of the ideas of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin on the subject of the Sacraments in general, and in order that we may correctly define their distinctive doctrines, we must also take account of the contemporary teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

It was not till the Council of Trent (1546-1563) that the Roman Catholic Church set itself to a clear codification of its doctrine and to a positive statement of its beliefs. It was the Reformation that rendered this work necessary, for, as Harnack says, "The dogmatic decrees of Trent are the shadow of the Reformation. That it was given to Catholicism to understand itself, to give expression to its dogmatic character, and thereby to rescue itself from the uncertainties of the Middle Ages, was a debt it owed to the Reformation."¹ When the Reformers began to teach and write, the Roman Catholic ideas on the Sacraments were those which had been set forth by Scholastic teachers. These ideas had been embodied in the *Decretum pro Armenis* in the Bull, Eugene IV. *Exultate deo* of 22nd November, 1439, at the Ferrara-Florence Council.²

¹ Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, vii. p. 36.

² Mirbt, *Quellen*, p. 162 f. Mansi, xxxi. p. 1054 f.

The brief and comprehensive definitions of this Decree made the task of the framers of the Sacramental doctrine of the Council of Trent an easy one. The number of the Sacraments was fixed at seven, thus homologating the opinion of Lombard and Thomas Aquinas. "The Sacraments of the New Law are seven—Baptism, Confirmation, Orders, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, and Marriage. These Sacraments of the New Law differ much from the Sacraments of the Old Law, for the earlier did not cause grace, but only prefigured a grace to be given through the Passion of Christ; while those which we have, both contain grace and convey it to those who worthily receive it."¹ Each Sacrament has its material and form and its special function. The material relates to the elements of which it is composed, *i.e.*, in Baptism the water, in the Eucharist the bread and wine, etc. The form relates to the words of the formula used by the priests.² "All the Sacraments are defined by three things, viz., by the elements as the *materia*, the words as the *forma*, and the person of the minister celebrating the Sacraments with the intention of doing what the Church does. If anyone of these be wanting, the Sacrament is not observed."³ Of the seven Sacraments, Baptism, Confirmation, and Orders impress an indelible character upon the soul and may not be repeated. "Amongst the Sacraments, there are three which indelibly impress character on the soul. Hence they are not repeated in the same person. But the remaining four do not impress character and admit of repetition."³ From the above Decree, which was official at the beginning of the sixteenth century, we see:

1st. That for the Roman Catholic Church grace is produced *ex opere operato* (through the act performed). It is operative, independent or apart from the merit of him who confers the Sacrament, or of him who receives it, in such a manner that the external act (*opus externum*) is the efficacious cause of the grace conferred. This was confirmed at the Seventh Session of the Council of Trent (March 3, 1547). "If anyone saith that by the said Sacraments of

¹ See note 2, p. 1.

² Professor MacKinnon, *Luther and the Reformation*, p. 84, note.

³ Mansi, xxxi. p. 1054; and Mirbt, *Quellen*, p. 162-165.

the New Law, grace is not conferred by the act performed, but that faith alone in the divine promise suffices for the obtaining of grace, let him be anathema." ¹ The efficient cause of the Sacrament is thus physical. The other causes come after. The decisions of the Councils of Florence and of Trent show that the Sacraments co-operate physically to produce grace.

2nd. As regards the reception of the Sacraments (except that of Penance), faith is not necessary. The affirmation of St. Thomas is, "Neither the true faith (*recta fides*) of the one baptising, nor the faith of the one baptised, is necessary, because the Sacrament is accomplished, not by the righteousness of the man who gives it, nor of him who receives it, but by the power of God." ²

But while faith is not necessary, Lombard and Aquinas assume the necessity of a good intention and disposition. "Save for the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the intention of receiving the Sacrament as a holy thing is requisite with adults for its validity. But the intention need not necessarily be active and actual. It is sufficient if it has once been present." ³ For Extreme Unction, still less suffices. "There suffices an intention which has not been conceived in an explicit manner, but which is presupposed to have been present." ³

The Roman Ritual says, "This Sacrament is to be administered to those (*sensibus destitutis*) who have at other times asked for it, or who would probably have asked for it. But none of these intentions are necessary for a valid reception of the Eucharist. This Sacrament does not pass with the act (*non transit actu*) like the other Sacraments, but it lasts after its administration, and it is for that, that it is validly received independent of any intention whatever on the part of him who receives it or of him who administers it." ³

As regards the fruitful reception of Baptism and Penance, a supernatural attrition suffices, and for the fruitful reception of the other Sacraments, the state of grace suffices.

¹ Schaff, *Creeds of the Greek and Latin Churches*, p. 121, Canon 8. Winer, *The Confessions of Christendom*, p. 244.

² *Theologia Dogmatica ad mentem St. Thomas Aquinatis* (1899), iii. p. 104 f.

³ *Theologia Dogmatica*, *op. cit.* p. 104 ff.

In short, the Sacraments have their effect *ex opere operato* on all those who do not deliberately place an obstacle to them (*non ponentibus obicem*).¹ From this statement, we can derive two practical consequences.²

1st, The Priest was everything. 2nd, The believer was nothing.

1st. The Priest who was the mediator of grace, and dispensed this grace to the faithful, was invested with almost divine powers. "At the altar, the Priest is God, when at the instant of the sacrifice, he places the divine victim in His state of immolation, and says, 'This is My body. This is My blood.'"³

But the rôle of the Priest is not less divine in the other Sacraments, and even the Roman Catechism speaks of "these angels, these Gods."⁴

2nd. In the Roman Catholic worship and ritual, the believer is nothing. We have seen that in the Bull of Eugene IV. (1439), the believer is not mentioned. "All the Sacraments consist of three things, viz., the material, the form, and the minister."⁵ If one of these is absent, the Sacrament is not accomplished. There is no question of the believer. As Seeberg says, "It is more than the Sacrament '*ex opere operato*,' it is the Sacrament '*ex opere operantis*.'"⁶

"Thus," according to Doumergue, "all the evangelical faith was denied. All the abuses of sacerdotalism were consecrated. All the rights of the individuality of the believer were suppressed. That was what the doctrine and practice of Roman Catholicism resulted in. That was the source, the heart of the errors, superstitions, abuses, scandals, accumulated at the end of the Middle Ages. Declared to be of age at seven years (the age when Louis XIV. and his councillors think that a child can throw off parental authority), the Roman Catholic believer

¹ Schaff, *Creeds of the Greek and Latin Churches*, p. 120.

² Doumergue, *Jean Calvin*, v. p. 322. Candlish, *The Sacraments*, p. 45.

³ Bungener, *Rome et le Vrai*, p. 291.

⁴ *Catechisma Romana, De Ordine*.

⁵ This work, p. 2.

⁶ Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, ii. p. 112, edition (1898).

remains a minor all his life. Such were the abuses. One foresees what the Reformation will be." ¹

LUTHER'S DOCTRINE OF THE SACRAMENTS

We next consider the teaching of Luther on the subject of the Sacraments.

I. The Lutheran definition of the *Nature* of the Sacraments agrees in all essential points with that of the Reformed Church. It is true that Luther started with the Scotist idea that the Sacraments are efficacious signs of grace (*signa efficacia*).² But this is modified by placing them in the most intimate association with faith. Their effectual operation depends on faith. "They are signs which help and incite faith . . . without which faith, they are of no benefit (W. ii. p. 686)." It altogether depends on faith, that the Sacraments "effect what they signify" (W. ii. p. 715). The Sacraments are symbols which awaken faith, and thus promise grace to all, but confer it only on believers. Kattenbusch, in the *Hauck-Herzog Encyclop.* (3rd edit.), Article, "Sacraments," traces *three* stages in the development of Luther's idea of the Sacraments, and points out how in 1518 and 1519, he taught the distinction between the "*sacramentum*" and the "*res sacramenti*," and regarded faith as the means which effects that the Sacraments accomplish that which they signify.

In the writings of 1520, all emphasis is placed upon the Word, and the *Sermon vom neuen Testament* is regarded by Dieckhoff ³ as a Siegesjubil on the rediscovered Word. In the third period (1525 onwards), there is a new development, when there is added to the sign and to the Word, God's command and precept (*Befehl und Ordnung*). This is true in the main, but Luther's working idea as to the Nature of a Sacrament is perhaps best exemplified in the teaching of the Augsburg Confession which was compiled by Melancthon in 1530.

Article XIV. reads as follows: "Concerning the use of the Sacraments, they teach that they are ordained, not only

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 323.

² Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 315.

³ Dieckhoff, *Die evangelische Abendmahlslehre*, p. 210.

to be marks of profession among men, but rather that they should be signs and testimonies of the will of God towards us, set forth unto us to stir up and confirm faith in such as use them. Therefore men must use the Sacraments so as to join to them faith which believes the promises offered and declared unto us by the Sacraments."¹

II. As regards the *Number* of the Sacraments, Luther sharply criticises the Roman doctrine in the *De Captivitate Babylonica*.² "To begin with, I must deny that there are Seven Sacraments, and must lay it down, for the time being, that there are only three, Baptism, Penance and the Bread, and that by the Court of Rome, all these have been brought into miserable bondage, and the Church despoiled of all her liberty, and yet, if I were to speak according to the usage of Scripture, I should hold that there was only one Sacrament, and three sacramental signs." This position is still maintained in the *Apology for the Augsburg Confession*. Repentance, however, soon dropped out of the common usage, although the Lutherans retained Confession as a distinct Church Institution.

The *character indelibilis* Luther rejects as an empty fiction (W. vi. p. 408).

III. The *Efficacy* of the Sacraments. We have seen the important office which Luther assigns to faith in regard to the use of the Sacraments. Faith is absolutely necessary for the receiving of the sanctifying and saving benefit. The *Augsburg Confession* is perfectly explicit on the point. "Wherefore they condemn those who teach that the Sacraments do justify by the work done, and do not teach that faith which believes in the remission of sins is requisite in the use of the Sacraments."³ In this, Luther is in accord with the Reformed teaching and in opposition to Rome. In one respect, however, he differs from the Reformed and approximates to the Romanists. He holds that the efficacy of the Sacraments is due to their own inherent virtue or power, a "power independent on the one hand, of the attendant influences of the Spirit (*extrinsecus accidens*), and

¹ Schaff, *Creeds of the Evangel. Prot. Churches*, p. 15.

² Wace and Buchheim, *Luther's Primary Works*, p. 147.

³ Schaff, *Creeds of the Evangel. Prot. Churches*, p. 15.

on the other hand, of the faith of the recipient." ¹ Faith, indeed, is necessary to any saving or sanctifying effect, but that is only a subjective condition on which the beneficial operation of the power inherent in the Sacraments is suspended. "Luther's own favourite illustration was drawn from the case of the woman who touched the Saviour's garment. There was inherent, healing virtue in Christ. Those who touched Him without faith, received no benefit. The woman having faith, was healed the moment she touched the hem of His garment. Her faith, however, was in no sense the source of the power which resided in Christ." ²

Luther did not at first hold this inherent power of the Sacraments. In the *De Captivitate Babylonica*, he says, "Thus it is not baptism that justifies any man, or is of any advantage, but faith in that word of promise to which baptism is added. . . . Thus it cannot be true that there is inherent in the Sacraments, a power effectual to produce justification, or that they are efficacious signs of grace." ³

There can be no doubt, however, that in his maturer teaching, after he had come into conflict with the Sacramentarians, he ascribed to the Sacraments a higher dignity, and attributed to them an inherent power. We have thus the *two essential elements in Luther's doctrine of the Sacraments*.

1st. They have inherent, saving, sanctifying power.

2nd. That power takes effect for good only upon believers.

This inherent divine virtue of the Sacraments does not reside in the elements; nor does it flow from him who administers them; nor is it due to the concurrent operation of the Holy Spirit, but to the Word. The elements employed are in themselves mere elements. With the Word, they are divinely efficacious, because the divine Word, wherever it is, is fraught with divine, supernatural, saving, sanctifying power which always takes effect on those who have faith to receive it.

IV. *The Necessity of the Sacraments*. Here Luther again approximated to the position of the Roman Church.

¹ Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, iii. p. 503.

² Hodge, *op. cit.* iii. p. 503 f.

³ Wace and Buchheim, *op. cit.* p. 190 f.

He held with the Romanists that the grace which the Sacraments signify is not received otherwise than in their use. According to Guerike,¹ "The three Churches, the Greek, Roman, and Lutheran are agreed in holding that in the Sacraments, the visible signs of such, really convey the invisible divine things, and therefore, that a participation of the Sacraments is necessary, in order to a participation of the heavenly gifts therein contained."

We may summarise Luther's doctrine as follows.² He is opposed:

1st. To the doctrine of the Romanists which denies the necessity of a living faith in the recipient in order to his experiencing the efficacy of the Sacraments, and which not only represents them as imbued with an inherent power, but also teaches that they confer grace *ex opere operato*.

2nd. To the doctrine which makes the Sacraments merely badges of a Christian profession.

3rd. To the doctrine which represents them as mere allegories or significant exhibitions of truth.

4th. To the doctrine which regards them as merely commemorative, as a portrait or a monument may be.

5th. To the doctrine which denies to them inherent efficacy, and refers their sanctifying influence to the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit. ✓

6th. To the doctrine which assumes that they confer nothing which may not be obtained by faith without them.

In all these points, with the exception of the last two, the Lutheran and Reformed Churches are agreed.

ZWINGLI'S DOCTRINE OF THE SACRAMENTS

In our treatment of Zwingli's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, we shall try to prove *two* things.

I. That in his Eucharistic teaching, there were three definite periods. In the first and third periods, his doctrine was positive and spiritual. In the second period, when he was in conflict with Luther, there are expressions to which the epithet "Zwinglian" can appropriately be applied.

¹ Guerike, *Symbolik*, p. 374.

² Hodge, *op. cit.* iii. p. 507.

II. That Zwingli's idea of faith was rich and deep, and that it already contained much that is usually found in the idea of the Sacraments.

The very name Sacrament is considered by Zwingli to be unbiblical and offensive. It has been adopted, he thinks, because it seemed to denote something high and mysterious. To the end of his life he held fast to the sentence which had always been the starting point of Luther.

"It is not the Sacrament that justifies, but faith."¹

In his early testimony, especially in the *Auslegung der* 67 *Schlussreden*, he adopted the Augustinian, purely symbolical view which was also advocated by Erasmus.²

"The Sacraments are nothing more than a sure sign or seal" (*opera* i. p. 239). They are, on the one hand, reminders to the believer in a symbolical form of salvation and its blessings, and are, on the other hand, a means by which he testifies his membership in the Church of Christ. There resides in them no kind of purifying or sanctifying power. They are simply signs in the sense indicated (iii. p. 229). We dare not attribute to the symbols the things which belong to the divine power alone (iv. p. 119). Only *two* signs of this kind are instituted by Christ. The other five Sacraments are to be abolished as not being commanded by Him. ✕

Zwingli is of opinion that Luther made too great approaches to the Roman Catholic teaching in the matter of the Sacraments.³ And yet, as Loofs has pointed out, Zwingli's views became milder and mellowed with the passing of the years. In his later teaching, he asserted firmly that the signs (*Zeichen*), as tangible teaching (*versinnliche Verkündigung*) can and ought to strengthen faith (iv. p. 57).⁴ ✓ It is in his final work (iv. p. 45), addressed to King Francis I., that we get his mature teaching on the question of the Sacraments.

In *Section V.*, entitled, "What is the efficacy of the Sacraments?" he warmly repudiates the accusation that he ascribes no virtue to them. He asserts, on the contrary, that they have not been given in vain, but that they are valuable in many respects.

¹ Hauck-Herzog, xvii. p. 374.

² Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 371.

³ Baur, *Zwingli's Theologie*, ii. p. 493.

⁴ Loofs, *Leitfaden*, p. 802.

He enumerates seven virtues of the Sacraments.

I. The Sacraments are sacred and venerable things, because Christ has not only instituted, but practised them (iv. p. 56).

II. They are testimonies to acts that have really taken place (iv. p. 56). It is then permissible to say that in a certain sense the Sacraments engender faith, but only a historical faith (iv. p. 55).

III. They stand in the place (*stehen an der Stelle*) of the things they signify, and therefore take their names. They thus render invisible things visible (iv. p. 56).

IV. They signify high and exalted things (*res arduas*). The worth of the symbol is all the greater when the thing signified is high and precious. As the marriage ring of the queen is not in her eyes an ordinary ring, only representing the worth of the material of which it is composed, so the sacramental bread is not common bread, but sacred (iv. p. 56).

V. The signs offer an analogy with the thing signified. In the Lord's Supper this analogy is *twofold*. On the one side, it relates to Christ. As the bread sustains the life, so Christ refreshes and sustains the soul. On the other side, it is related to the Church. As the bread is made up of a multitude of grains (*aus vielen Beeren zusammen fliesset*), the Church is composed of an infinite number of members (iv. 56 f.).

VI. The Sacraments, especially the Supper, bring help to faith. It is through the avenue of our senses that Satan tries to penetrate into the fortress of our faith (iv. 57 f.).

Elsewhere, Zwingli says that the participation in the Sacraments is an exercise for our faith (iv. p. 36).

VII. The Sacraments have finally (in the sense of the Latin word) the worth of an oath (*Eid*). He who, without being a Christian, is joined by this oath to the people of Christ does not discern the body of Christ and the Church, for we form one body with Him (iv. p. 54).

These propositions represent Zwingli's complete and final teaching on the Sacraments, and when we evaluate them, we have always to bear in mind that he held a deeply spiritual view of faith.

CALVIN'S DOCTRINE OF THE SACRAMENTS

It is significant that Calvin made his doctrine of the Sacraments a part of his doctrine of the Church. Book IV. of the *Institutes* has for its heading, "Of the external means or helps by which God allures us into fellowship with Christ, and keeps us in it." These means are precisely, the Church, its functions and its institutions. As regards the Sacraments, they are "another help akin to the preaching of the Gospel, to sustain and confirm our faith" (xiv. i.).

We have seen how the prevalent Roman Catholic view at the beginning of the sixteenth century bound the grace of God inextricably with the sacramental transaction. This grace, a divine substance, was put into the Sacrament as if by magic, and it acted on the soul independently of the faith of the receiver. This view has been characterised by Schultz as *magisch*.¹ Luther, in the *De Captivitate Babylonica* and other writings, opposed this teaching. He displaced the Sacrament from the centre, and put God's promise and the faith of man into the principal place. Luther's action was considered to be a real revolution, and as a logical development of this negation, there came the rational Spiritualism of Karlstadt and then of the Swiss, which replaced the objective importance of the Sacrament by a merely symbolical and subjective view, and declared that the only necessary thing was the direct influence of the Holy Spirit upon the soul.

This view held that as soon as faith is strong enough it can dispense with the signs, so that in the last resort the Sacraments become mere official badges or "rally emblems" (*Bundeszeichen*) by which the Church recognises its members.²

Luther, however, could not endure this emptying of the Sacraments. His realism, which was ever hungry for assurance, protested, and he proclaimed against the Sacramentarians, the necessity and value of Church ordinances and of the Sacraments, by which God desires to help

¹ Schultz, *Zur Lehre vom heiligen Abendmahl*, p. 4.

² Wernle, P., *Der evangelische Glaube*—"Calvin," p. 88. Beckmann, Joachim, *Vom Sakrament bei Calvin*, 1926.

doubting and restless consciences. We have seen how in his later doctrine he made a half-return to the Roman Catholic view in his teaching on the objectivity of the grace offered to us in the Sacraments. *Wunderhaft* is the epithet applied by Schultze to this final phase.

Martin Bucer attempted to mediate between the realistic view of Luther and the symbolical view of the Swiss. Formulae of agreement had been suggested between the Swiss and the Strasbourgers, and between the Strasbourgers and Luther, at the very time when Calvin issued the *First Edition of the Institutes* in 1536. The question of the Sacraments had thus become central and important.

Calvin, who wrote his early work in France, appears to have formed his own opinion. It was an opinion free from fanaticism and prejudice, and was characterised by his flair for clear and clean-cut solutions.

It is possible that Luther's *De Captivitate Babylonica* and Melancthon's *Loci* (1521) appealed to him as suggesting the view of the Sacraments which was most in accordance with Holy Scripture.

In the main point, he held to the early teaching of Luther, and rejected all magical intervention. He emphasised the value of the symbols which accompany and corroborate God's words and strengthen faith. He even went a little further with Luther in his later writings, where he inveighed against the depreciation of the Sacraments. He did not wish to have anything to do with a faith which had no need of external help or support, and he maintained the union between the internal spiritual influence and the external presentations of divine grace in the Sacraments and the Word. On the other hand, he refused to follow the reactionary tendencies of the later Luther, when he inclined to the *magisch* view.

Calvin rejected the material union of grace with the sacramental signs, and in the Lord's Supper he adopted Zwingli's symbolical interpretation of the words of Institution. In this way he sought to preserve Luther's lofty estimation of the Sacraments free from all magical and superstitious elements. This independent position he defended clearly and strongly from the issue of the *First Edition of his Institutes* in 1536 to his death in 1564.

In his *Institutes*, Calvin begins with a simple definition. "The Sacrament is an external sign by which God seals on our consciences His promises of good-will towards us, in order to strengthen the weakness of our faith. In other words, the Sacrament is a testimony of the grace of God, confirmed by an external sign" (iv. 14. para. 1).

There is no Sacrament without a preceding promise. The Sacrament is its sequel, and it is added to confirm and seal the promise, because of our human needs and weakness. This is the basic idea of Luther's sacramental doctrine as formulated in the *De Captivitate Babylonica*, which emphasised the testamentary character of the divine grace, and which stamped the Sacrament as an attestation of the divine will. By this means a relation was established between the divine promise and human faith.

According to this standpoint, there is no divine necessity for the Sacraments, but merely a human necessity, for the strengthening of faith through symbolical signs. Only the feebleness of our faith renders the external help necessary. In this way, as Wernle says, Calvin shows a deeper knowledge of human nature than Zwingli, for he makes more allowance for our human imperfections.¹ "But as our faith is slender and weak, so, if it be not propped up on every side and supported by all kinds of means, it wanes and even falls" (iv. 14. para. 3). We are human, not spiritual. We "creep on the ground," and "cleave to the flesh." Therefore God accommodates Himself to our weak comprehension, and tries to lead us to Himself by earthly means, not that there is miraculous power in these things, but because He has destined them for this end and signification.

But some may say, "How can the external sign give a greater assurance to the Word?" (iv. 14, para. 5). In reply, Calvin speaks of the "sealing" nature of the Sacraments. He mentions the seal of the title-deed which provides a much stronger attestation of its contents, and he cites the word "seal" as used by Paul (Romans iv.), and the example of the Old Testament covenants. He calls them also "exercises" which confirm our faith in the Word of God, and because we are carnal, they are exhibited

¹ Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 88.

under carnal objects (para. 6). He draws an illustration from Augustine, who speaks of "visible words," and he himself uses another, "supports and pillars of our faith, but not the foundation, for that is God's work alone." That the wicked may also receive these signs does not destroy their value, for, as Augustine again testifies, "The efficacy of the Word is produced in the Sacrament, not because it is spoken, but because it is believed" (para. 7). The Sacraments are thus means and expedients (*Hilfsmittel*) which God employs to nourish, exercise, and augment our faith.¹

In all this, there is no thought which goes beyond Luther's Sacramental doctrine of 1520. But now Calvin proceeds to defend his teaching against the *Left* which depreciates the Sacraments, and against the *Right* which overestimates them.

On the part of the *Left*, four objections have been levelled against his doctrine.

The First Objection of this class of teachers is based on the autonomy of faith, which, they assert, leans unshakingly on the mercy of God. Calvin shudders at this daring certainty, which, as he believes, never has been, and never will be attained by any man. Faith, as the Bible teaches, and as we know by our own Christian experience, has always to fight against the unbelief in our own souls, and must grow day by day through all its stages, until it reaches its full ripeness. "Lord, increase our faith," and "Lord, I believe. Help Thou mine unbelief." These are testimonies of genuine Christian experience. The expression, "To believe with the whole heart," does not mean perfect adherence to Christ. It means to hunger and thirst, and to sigh for Him with a burning heart. In all this Calvin revealed himself as an experiential theologian.

A Second Objection to the strengthening of faith through the Sacraments is founded on the plea that this diminishes the power of the Holy Ghost, Who alone is the beginning, the middle and the end of faith (iv. 14, para. 8 f.). Without denying in the least the spiritual origin of faith, Calvin rejoices in the *threefold* bounty of God, that He leads us to Himself by the Word, the Sacraments, and the inner illumination of the Holy Spirit. He considers his

¹ Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 89.

teaching to be far richer than that of his opponents. He is also of the opinion that even the Bible considers the strengthening of faith by the Sacraments so highly, that it at times teaches that the deprival of the Sacraments is a sign of the deprivation of the divine grace (iv. 14, para. 12).

A Third Class of Objectors fear that through a high estimation of the Sacraments there is a diminution of the honour due to God, and an attribution of power to the creatures (iv. 14, para. 12).

Calvin maintains that God only uses means and instruments in order to subdue all things to His glory. He uses such natural things as bread and sunshine and fire to nourish our bodies, and spiritual things like the Sacraments to nourish our faith. Our trust, however, is not in bread, nor sun, nor fire, nor Sacraments, nor ought the glory of God to be transferred to them. Our faith and confession should rise to Him Who is the author of the Sacraments and of all things.¹

A Fourth Objection to his doctrine is founded on the ancient meaning of the Latin word *sacramentum*, which designated the solemn oath made by the soldier to his commander on entering his service (iv. 14, para. 13).

But Calvin, who is conversant with Patristic teaching, defends himself by explaining that the Fathers understood by the word *sacramentum* a "sacred sign," and he illustrates his contention by the fact that the word *fides* has acquired a new sense in Christian speech. He does not object to the analogies drawn from the ancients, but he wishes to distinguish between the main and the secondary meanings of words. The first meaning of the Sacraments is that they contribute to our faith in God. The secondary thing is, that they attest our faith before men (iv. 14, para. 13). And now he proceeds to defend his teaching against the *Right*—the over-estimation of the Sacraments (iv. 14, para. 14).

There are *two* theories which Calvin rejects, both of which assert that secret virtue resides in the Sacraments.

1st. He refutes the Scholastic theory, that the Sacraments of the New Law justify and mediate grace, if we do

¹ Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 90.

not interpose the obstacle of mortal sin.¹ Calvin attributes this fatal, pestilential, nay, "devilish doctrine" to some exaggerated statements of the Fathers, especially of Augustine. He opposes to them the evangelical thesis, that Sacraments are merely concomitant signs of God's Word, which can only be beneficial if they are received by faith.

2nd. He opposes the false teaching which holds that a hidden virtue is bound with the Sacraments, so that the Grace of God is distributed in them in the same way as wine from a wine cup (iv. 14, para. 17).

Calvin maintains firmly that the only service of the Sacraments consists in their testifying and declaring the divine Love, and that their issue depends entirely on the opening of our heart and spirit for the understanding of the testimony. The Sacraments are what messengers of good news are to men, or what earnestness are in ratifying pactions. "The Holy Spirit Whom the Sacraments do not bring promiscuously to all, but Whom the Lord specially confers on His Own, brings the gifts along with him, makes way for the Sacraments, and causes them to bear fruit" (iv. 14, para. 17).

Perhaps in dealing with this latter class of teachers Calvin had in his mind some of the expressions of Luther and his followers.

On the other hand, his treatment of the subject gives one the impression that he considers himself in accord with the main features of Luther's doctrine.

He now speaks briefly on the ceremonies of the Old Testament, and he ascribes to them the same importance and significance as to the New Testament Sacraments, with the only difference, that the former are related to the promised, future Christ, and the latter to the Christ already manifested and come (iv. 14, para. 20).

Calvin touches here on a debated question which occasioned much dispute with the Anabaptists—the question of the unity or of the opposition of the Old and New Testaments. On its solution depended the right or the wrong of Infant Baptism.

¹ See *Council of Ferrara-Florence*, p. 1 of this work. Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 91.

He treats of this matter particularly in the *Second Edition of the Institutes*. In concluding, he gives a summary of his teaching on the significance of the Sacraments. "Baptism testifies that we are washed and purified; the Supper of the Eucharist that we are redeemed. Ablution is prefigured by water, and satisfaction by blood" (iv. 14, para. 32).

It perhaps seems strange that he should say "blood," and not "bread and wine," corresponding to the "water" of baptism. Wernle is of opinion that this expression was used in accordance with the first Epistle of John, where the "water" and the "blood" are mentioned as the two witnesses. "For this subtlety Calvin is indebted to the Bible."¹

There can be no doubt that in his doctrine of the Sacraments, Calvin stands nearer to Luther than to the Swiss.

God works in the soul of man through the Holy Ghost, but He uses as instruments the external, visible Church ordinances of Preaching and the Sacraments. Through these He strengthens the feeble faith of man. But just because he felt himself to be such a strong Lutheran, he found it necessary to combat the superstition which mingled the outward sign and the substance of the Sacraments. For this reason, he stood up strongly in the *Second Edition of the Institutes*, for the decisive rôle of the Holy Spirit, Whom he calls, in accordance with Augustine, "the interior teacher of the soul."

If the Spirit is absent, the Sacraments cannot offer us anything more than the light can bestow on blind eyes, or the voice on deaf ears. The Spirit gives the force and power. The Sacrament is merely the servant. The Sacraments cannot move a hair without the power of the Spirit.

Calvin uses as an illustration of His working the arts which one employs in the case of a man whom one wishes to persuade to a certain course of action. "Nothing is gained if the individual himself possess not a clear and acute judgment, by which he may be able to weigh the value of your arguments; if, moreover, he is not of a docile disposition, and ready to listen to doctrine. On the other

¹ Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 92.

hand, when opposite feelings exist, the same person may acquiesce " (iv. 14, para. 10).

The same work is performed in us by the Spirit.

" That the Word may not fall upon the ear, or the Sacraments be presented to our eye in vain. . . . He softens our heart . . . in short, transmits those external words and Sacraments from the ear to the soul " (iv. 14, para. 10).

The Sacraments show us God's grace, but the Holy Spirit conducts from the eye to the heart.

Christ used a similar illustration in the parable of the seed, where he taught that it depends entirely on the heart whether it take root or not. So the Holy Spirit works in the heart.

All this might seem too subjective, but to Calvin it had another meaning. He combats with such words the over-estimation of the Sacraments, but, at the same time, he is convinced of their necessity for the faith of man. " The Sacraments, then, are inserted (*encadrés*) between the Word and the Spirit." ¹ " Calvin was not actually spiritualistic. He was a churchman without any ecclesiastical superstition. His watchword on the question of the Sacraments was, ' Neither too little, nor too much.' " ²

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 326.

² Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 93.

CHAPTER II

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

IF in order to have a clear idea of the Reformers' doctrine of the Sacraments it is necessary to know the corresponding doctrine of Rome, we can say with equal truth, that for a right understanding and appreciation of their theories on the Lord's Supper it is essential to study the Eucharistic teaching of the Church of the Middle Ages. For it is this teaching that they modify or refute.

The Mediaeval doctrine of the Lord's Supper was solemnly framed as a dogma at the 4th Lateran Council (1215), and it is important to notice, as Harnack points out, that it is here immediately attached to the Confession of the Trinity and the Incarnation. "In this way it is represented in this symbol as having a most intimate relation to these doctrines, as, indeed, forming with them a unity."¹

In the symbol of 1215, transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the Mass were expressly taught.

"Moreover, there is one universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one whatever can be saved, in which Jesus is at the one time Priest and Sacrifice. His body and blood are truly contained in the sacrifice of the altar under the appearance of bread and wine, the bread being transubstantiated into the body, and the wine into the blood by human power, so that for the effecting of the mystery of unity, we receive of His what He received of ours. This Sacrament especially no one can administer but the Priest who has been ordained according to the Church Authority,

¹ Harnack, *op. cit.* vi. p. 53.

which Jesus Christ gave to the Apostles and their successors." ¹

The doctrine was defined in similar terms in the Bull, "*Exultate deo*," November 22, 1439, Pope Eugene IV.² "The priest, speaking in the person of Christ, makes this Sacrament. For by virtue of the very words, the substance of the bread is connected with the body of Christ, and the substance of the wine with His blood, yet in such a way, that Christ is contained entire under the form of the bread, and entire, under the form of the wine. Also under any part of the consecrated wafer and consecrated wine, when a division is made, is the whole Christ. And, because through grace, man is incorporated into Christ and united to His members, it follows that through this Sacrament, grace is increased in those who receive it worthily, and every effect which material food and drink produce for the bodily life by sustaining and increasing and restoring and delighting it, this Sacrament produces for the spiritual life. In it, as Pope Urban says, we recall the pleasant memory of our Saviour, we are held back from evil, we are strengthened in good, and we advance to growth in virtues and graces."

"The ideas of the Roman Catholic Church go back to two principles," says Doumergue, "from which all secondary ideas are derived—transubstantiation and the Mass, that being the condition previous to this, this being the logical result of that."³ "With the doctrine of transubstantiation, falls equally the theory of the Mass and the idea of the *opus operatum*," writes Lobstein.⁴

In the Roman Catholic system, the bond which unites the three conceptions of the *opus operatum*, transubstantiation and the Mass is very easy to discern. It is true that each conception was formed independently of the other, and each has its distinct and particular history; but the documents in which the Roman theology has collected its classic and normative expression do not leave any doubt as

¹ Mansi, xxii. p. 982.

² Mirbt, *Quellen*, p. 261, para. 12. Stone, *The Holy Eucharist*, i. p. 379.

³ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 344-345.

⁴ Lobstein, *La doctrine de la sainte Cène*, p. 176.

to the indissoluble concatenation which joins these three ideas in one unusual union.

If the theory of the Mass were reduced to the simple commemoration of the sacrifice on Calvary, it would correspond to one of the most important motives which inspired the first thought of the rite of the Supper. But, according to the Roman Catholic, the Mass is much more than a memorial. It is a sacrifice of propitiation, identified with the sacrifice on the Cross. It is the same victim, the same sacrifice, the same gift.¹ Now, in order that the Mass should renew the sacrifice on Calvary, it is necessary that the body and blood of the Master should be substantially present under the accidents and appearances of the consecrated bread and wine.² Like the doctrine of the Mass, the theory of the *opus operatum* is a corollary of the dogma of transubstantiation. The *opus operatum* does not confine itself, as Moehler pretends, to affirming the objective character of the sacramental grace.³ It attributes also to the Eucharist an efficacy independent of the internal state of mind of the communicant. The *opus operatum* is necessary as soon as the premises are admitted, and these premises are summed up in the idea of the substantial presence of Christ under the elements of the Supper.

The *practical consequences* that the Roman Catholic Church has drawn from those dogmatic axioms are numerous and far-reaching. The most common of these are the Reservation of the Host, the Adoration of the Sacrament, and the celebration of the Corpus Christi.

Such was the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Lord's Supper, as it was afterwards adopted substantially by the Council of Trent.

"Two elements concurred from the beginning in its construction," says Seeberg, "the materialising of grace, and the hierarchical conception of the Church."⁴

This was the orthodox teaching in the early part of the sixteenth century. As Professor MacKinnon points out, "There had been opposition to this doctrine, since the days

¹ *Council of Trent*, Session xxii. Canon 3.

² Lobstein, *op. cit.* p. 176.

³ Moehler, *Symbolik*, p. 255 f.

⁴ Seeberg, *op. cit.* ii. p. 144.

of Ratramnus and Radbertus in the 9th Century, up to the time of the Nominalist School which suggested a less crass form of belief, whilst submitting to the received conception as an authoritative doctrine of the Church." ¹

We shall see in our discussion of the *De Captivitate Babylonica* what help Luther derived from the Nominalist School in refuting the Roman Catholic teaching.

We shall meet in Zwingli's writings a doctrine which was directed largely against the Mass.

In our study of the *Final Edition of the Institutes* (1559) we shall find the ripe fruit of Calvin's thought, when he deals in fullest manner with all the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church.

Our next task is to state clearly the teaching of Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper. We shall endeavour to define their distinctive theories, as they were gradually developed from the time of their earliest writings, through the course of their discussions and disputes, until the final statement of their doctrines.

We shall treat our subject historically, and our aim will be to discover in this early Reformation period points of contact with the later testimony of Calvin, who found, when he began to teach in 1536, that the way had been prepared for him. Calvin arrived in the fulness of the times.

¹ Professor MacKinnon, *op. cit.* p. 86.

CHAPTER III

LUTHER'S EARLY TEACHING ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

A. BEFORE HIS CONTROVERSY WITH KARLSTADT

- I. 1518. Sermon on Maundy Thursday, on the Worthy Preparation for the Sacrament—II. 1519. *Ein Sermon vom hochw. Sakr. des Leichnams Christi*—III. 1520. (a) *Sermon vom Neuen Testament*—(b) *De Captivitate Babylonica*—IV. Summing up of Luther's Teaching at this time—V. 1523. *Vom Anbeten des Sakraments des heiligen Leichnams Christi* (An answer to the Bohemian Brethren, who were *Precursors of Calvin*).

B. LUTHER'S CONTROVERSY WITH KARLSTADT

Karlstadt's Teaching on the Lord's Supper—Luther's Reply in the *Wider die himmelischen Propheten*.

THE earliest work from Luther's hand which has been preserved to us is the *Elucidation of the Psalms*, the greater portion of which dates from the years 1513 and 1514, when he delivered his first lectures upon this portion of the Bible. He himself in the preface to his Latin works says of his first printed publications, that the reader will observe how many and what important articles he at that time still humbly granted to the Pope, articles which he afterwards came to recognise as blasphemy and abominable errors. At another time he went so far as to say that "even after he became a Doctor, he knew no better than to imagine that his monk's cowl was pleasing to God, and the way to heaven."¹

It was thus characteristic of Luther that he was able only by a very gradual process to abandon the traditional tenets, and yet, even in his early writings, we can trace the working

¹ Erlangen Edition, 9. p. 15.

of that evangelical principle which was afterwards to form the basis of his Reformatory testimony. Professor MacKinnon has remarked how in the *Elucidation of the Psalms*, "In numerous characteristic passages, he proclaims the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith as he is learning to understand it."¹ This is also the opinion of Seeberg,² who, in his exposition of Luther's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, proceeds from the writing, *Ein Sermon vom hochw. Sakr. des Leichnams Christi*, 1519.³ We can, however, trace an even earlier strand of teaching in the *Sermon on Maundy Thursday*, 1518, *on the worthy preparation for the Sacrament*.⁴

I

In this work, Luther starts from the question how one may worthily prepare oneself for the enjoyment of the Holy Supper. He has here nothing to do immediately with the theories about the relation of the elements to Christ's body and blood, but with the way to the blessing of the Sacrament. In place of the Romish requirement of freedom from mortal sins in order to a worthy partaking, he desires faith. For "All sins that are committed in a state of unbelief are mortal sins." He does not require a definite measure of accurate, dogmatic knowledge concerning the Holy Supper. The true preparation is a soul hungering for God's righteousness and grace, and a firm and joyful faith. "If anyone," says he, "be altogether too weak in faith, let him suffer himself to be borne in the arms of the Holy Mother, the Church, that the Lord may at least be induced to regard her faith. He should go to the Sacrament in faith, either that of the entire Christian Church, or at least, that of some pious, individual Christian of his acquaintance. He should say, 'Lord, accept me in the faith of the whole Christian Church, or of this or that man; for, however it may be with me, I must be obedient to Thy Church which bids me come to the Sacrament.'"⁵

¹ Professor MacKinnon, *Luther and the Reformation*, p. 159.

² Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 323.

³ Erl. ed. 27, p. 25 ff.

⁴ Erl. ed. 17, p. 55.

⁵ Erl. edit. 17, p. 62 f. Koestlin, *Luthers Theologie*, i. p. 276 f.

In this early stage of Luther's teaching, as in the entire course of Zwingli's teaching, there is an emphasis on the Christian Community, and on the relation of the individual members one to another. In the Holy Sacrament, the elements of the Eucharist are a picture of this, for the bread is made up of many grains and the wine of many grapes.¹ Even here, in Luther's earliest utterances, we see important divergences from the Roman Catholic tradition. There is side by side with the intercommunion of believers a hint of the fundamental Protestant doctrine of the "Universal priesthood of believers." The grace of God is independent of the power of the clerical dispenser. Forgiveness may be announced not only by those in official positions, but with equal efficacy by any plain Christian brother. In the passage quoted,¹ along with the whole Church is placed the pious believer upon whom the weaker Christian may lean for support. Already, Maundy Thursday, 1518, as the danger of expulsion from the fellowship of the Romish ecclesiastical establishment began to threaten him, Luther had made up his mind that salvation is not dependent on association with it.

II

In 1519 there appeared *Ein Sermon vom hochw. Sakr. des Leichnams Christi*.² In this sermon we have what Kahnis characterises as the "mystic bridge between the Middle Ages and the Reformation—an attempt to regenerate the Romish Mass from the heart outwards, without denying the miracle of transubstantiation."³

According to this writing, there are *three* moments in the Sacrament—the signs, the import or work, and faith.

The Sacrament or sign in and of itself is visible and outward. The import or significance is spiritual and inward (in the spirit of man). It is to the exposition of the latter, which he calls also the work or fruit of the Sacrament, that he chiefly addresses himself in the document before us. The import or work of the Sacrament he declares to be the communion of saints. The saints are members of Christ

¹ See note 5, p. 24.

² Erl. edit. 27, p. 25 f. Dieckhoff, *Die evangelische Lehre*, p. 192.

³ Kahnis, *Die Lehre vom Abendmahl*, p. 129.

and of the Church, and all the spiritual possessions of Christ and his saints are imparted to and become the common possession of him who receives the Sacrament. On the other hand, all sufferings and sins become a common possession. The individual receives in the Sacrament a sign of such union with Christ and the saints as makes the sufferings and life of Christ, as well as the lives and sufferings of all the saints, his own. The assurance is thus given to him in the Sacrament, that the sin by which he feels himself assailed, assails not him alone, but the Son of God, and all the saints on earth and in Heaven; and that Christ and the saints intercede before God for him.¹ As regards the recipient, he, upon his part, must bear the misfortunes of Christ and His saints. He must make the sorrows and adversities of all others his own. Here again Luther employs the figure already used in the *De digna preparatione* of bread as composed of many grains. "Just as each separate grain loses its form and takes upon itself the common body of the bread, so Christ, with all His saints, takes upon Himself our form, and we become one loaf, one bread, one body. The communion is thus one of *unitas* and *caritas*." ²

He concludes this section with the comprehensive words, "From all of this it is clear, that this Sacrament is nothing else than a divine sign, in which Christ and all the saints, with all their works, sufferings, and possessions, are given and appropriated for the consolation of all who are in distress, etc. To receive the Sacrament is nothing else than to desire all this, and firmly to believe that it takes place." ³

And now in the *third* moment (faith) of the sacramental transaction, we find ourselves face to face with the point of chief importance in the theory of Luther. It is faith which brings the sign and the thing signified together. He therefore proceeds to say, after the conclusion of the paragraph just quoted, "Here belongs the third part of the Sacrament, namely faith, in which the power lies." "Thou must also desire and firmly believe that thou hast received it (the communion), etc."

If, therefore, Luther describes such communion as a result and fruit of the Sacrament, it can yet only become

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 323.

² Erl. edit. 27, p. 25 ff.

³ Koestlin, *op. cit.* i. p. 340 f.

such, according to his view, through faith. Faith is to be constantly exercised by approaching the Sacrament and in attending Mass. "It is necessary and good to go often to the Sacrament, or to exercise and strengthen such faith daily in the Mass. Faith makes the Sacrament out of a bare '*opus operatum*' into an '*opus operantis*.'" ¹ If we now take a general view of the contents of this work, we cannot but remark on the comparative mildness of Luther's polemic on the Mass. When we reflect upon the manner in which the prevalent practice relegated the *communio* to the background, we might have expected a stronger condemnation of the Roman Catholic rite.

This has been noted by Dieckhoff and Graebke, who conclude that at this period Luther's ideas on the Lord's Supper were as yet very undeveloped.

"The meaning of the words of Institution were not yet understood." ² "The presence of Christ's body is taken for granted, but floats yet in air. Transubstantiation is not yet denied." ³ This writing, however, is full of significance. If it is a question of a *sehen*, *hören*, and *essen* in the Sacrament, here the *sehen* is the characteristic moment. ⁴ It is an epoch point in Luther's development, and it is an approach to a clearer realisation of the truth which he afterwards contended for against Zwingli, the truth of the communion of the believer with His Lord. Luther came here, as Seeberg says, very near to the original thought of the Supper. It may be, as Dorner holds, the mere outward husk that he has grasped, but it gives promise of a transition to better things. ⁵

III

The *third* stage in the development of Luther's doctrine of the Supper previous to his controversy with Karlstadt is shown in two writings dating from the year 1520.

(A) *The Sermon vom neuen Testament*. ⁶

(B) *The De Captivitate Babylonica*. ⁷

¹ Erlangen edit. 27, p. 15 f.

² Dieckhoff, *op. cit.* p. 205.

³ Graebke, *op. cit.* p. 26.

⁴ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 324 f.

⁵ Dorner, *A History of Protestant Theology*, i. p. 156.

⁶ Erl. edit. 27, p. 130 f. ⁷ Wace and Buchheim, *op. cit.* pp. 141-181.

IIIA

In the former, Luther begins with a denunciation of the numerous ecclesiastical ordinances then in use, and describes the Holy Mass as the only order of divine service instituted by Christ. The entire Mass, according to Luther, with its whole nature, work and benefit and fruit, lies in the *words* of Christ with which it is celebrated and with which we are commanded to celebrate it. Indeed this whole sermon, as Dieckhoff remarks,¹ "reads like a song of victory (*Siegesjubil*) over the rediscovered Word." "What devil," Luther asks, "suggested that the words should be hidden from the people? In the Sacrament, everything lies in the words that Jesus speaks, which we would verily set in gold and precious stones." If, then, we can characterise Luther's previous teaching on the Lord's Supper as an emphasis on the *sehen*,² we can describe this further development as a stressing of the *hören*. Now there appears the "Hearing" of the words of Institution as the chief thing in the Sacrament. These words of Institution are not merely a formula of consecration, but a promise of grace. The words, "Cup of the New Testament," contain a new and imperishable treasure—the forgiveness of sins. The significance thus given to the words of Institution leads to the demand that they be not spoken by the priest as secret words, but "sung as loudly as possible," and to the desire that masses might be "read in German."³

As to the relation of Christ's body and blood to the elements, which in the writing of 1519 had been characterised as a "false subtlety to rack one's brains about," we get clearer teaching in the *second* treatise of 1520—*Praeludium de Captivitate Babylonica*.⁴

¹ Dieckhoff, *op. cit.* p. 210.

² Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 326.

³ Erl. edit. 27, p. 154.

⁴ Dieckhoff, *op. cit.* p. 232. Wernle, *op. cit.* "Luther," p. 27. Wace and Buchheim, *op. cit.* p. 141-181.

III B

This treatise appeared in October, 1520. Luther had written it in full expectation of the Papal Bull, which Eck began to publish against him in Germany in September of that year. Luther's friend, Lange, had called the *Address to the Nobility* a War Trumpet, but no less bold was the call to battle now sounded in this second work. In it he represents the Papacy as the Babylonian Empire, and cites its attitude to the Lord's Supper as an example of its tyranny. This tyranny consists in three things.

- (a) The denial of the cup to the laity.
- (β) The doctrine of transubstantiation.
- (γ) The conception of the Mass as a good work or sacrifice.

(a) He describes as the *first captivity* the *withholding of the cup from the laity*. Communion in both kinds, he holds, is in conformity with the teaching of I. Cor. xi. and the Synoptic Gospels (151). He quotes the words of the Lord, "Drink ye all of it," and asks why the greater thing should be granted to the laity, *i.e.*, that the Lord's blood was shed for them, and yet the less be denied them, *i.e.*, that the sign of this blood is also here for them. Nevertheless, in characteristic fashion, Luther would not forcibly claim the right of double communion.¹ We often find him "violent in word and compromising in action."² He only insists that no one will justify the tyranny manifested in the withholding of the privilege. Meanwhile, let it be endured, just as one would a captivity among the Turks, where neither element could be received (155).

(β) The *second captivity* is seen in the *doctrine of transubstantiation* (155). This doctrine is a milder bondage. Luther now confesses who it was that had first awakened suspicions in his mind concerning this subject, namely, Cardinal Cambray and Peter D'Ailly, whose works he had studied already upon every opportunity at Erfurt. He had

N.B.—Numbers in brackets refer to pages in Wace and Buchheim, *op. cit.*

¹ Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 27.

² Professor MacKinnon's Lectures, Dec., 1924, Edinburgh.

found there developed with great acuteness the opinion, that in the Sacrament real bread and wine are present, and not merely their properties (150). It is therefore no new theory which Luther brings forward here, but the so-called consubstantiation which Rupert of Deutz set forth.¹ D'Ailly had maintained that the co-existence of the body of Christ with the substance of the bread, by virtue of a *unio*, could be at least as easily assumed as a presence of the body under the properties of the bread, from which the substance has been removed. Luther then proceeds to say that afterwards, when he saw what kind of a Church it was that had supported the decision lamented by D'Ailly, *i.e.*, the Thomistic and Aristotelian Church, he became bolder. He is now as thoroughly convinced in his view that it is manifestly true bread and wine, in which are the true flesh and the true blood of Christ, as they (the Romanists) are in their opinion, when they locate these under the properties of the bread and wine (156). "The opinions of the Thomists, even though approved by Pope and Council, are still only opinions, and do not become articles of faith, for that which is maintained without Scriptural proof or well-attested revelation, may be the basis of an opinion, but we are not compelled to believe it (156). But the opinion of Thomas² in question, is entirely without any Scriptural evidence or reasonable basis, and does not even show an acquaintance with philosophy and dialectics. The Evangelists clearly assert that bread was taken and blessed by Christ. Christ calls upon the disciples to receive and eat this bread, since this very thing, namely, the bread taken and broken by Him, is His body. Likewise, Paul calls it bread. He does not say 'in the bread,' but, 'the bread is the communion of the body of Christ'" (160).

We are to understand true bread and wine, just as a true cup. Even the Thomists do not hold to the transubstantiation of the cup (157). On the question of the

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 325. Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 28.

² In this impeachment of the Thomists, Luther was mistaken, as transubstantiation was sanctioned by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), before Thomas was born (Prof. MacKinnon's Lectures, Edinburgh, December, 1924).

relation of the bread and the wine to the body and blood of Christ, Luther enquires with D'Ailly, why Christ cannot cause his body to be contained just as well within the substance of the bread as within its properties. He then employs as an illustration "fire and iron," which are two substances, but which are yet so commingled in "glowing-iron" that every part is both fire and iron. Much rather, then, might not the glorified body of Christ be in every part of the substance of the bread? It will be observed that it is the *glorified* body of Christ, as such, for which Luther claims this possibility.

Finally, he appeals in support of his view (161) of the relation of the bread and the body to the relation existing between the two natures of Christ. For the bodily indwelling of the divinity of Christ no transubstantiation of the human nature was required, but without assailing the integrity of either nature, we assert, "This man is God. This God is man." Thus, while both the bread and the body remain, we may yet say, "This bread is My body." In general, in this whole discussion, it is evident that Luther is here concerned more for the refutation of his antagonists than for the positive presentation of any theory of his own. He, however, makes the clear assertion that the consecrated bread and wine *are* the body and blood of Christ. They are still bread and wine, as well as the body and blood. The body and blood are as really present as if the doctrine of transubstantiation were true, and yet, though transubstantiation is not to be imposed on any, it may be held by those who wish it. In this simple faith, the common people of the time believe the truth, that the body and blood of Christ are truly contained in the Sacrament, without troubling themselves with the subtleties of the theologians about substance and accident (161). Of his own view, he says in conclusion, "Thus meanwhile, I shall stand scrupulously for the honour of the sacred words of God, to which I shall not suffer violence to be done by petty reasonings" (161).

(γ) The *third captivity of the Sacrament* is for Luther the *sacrifice of the Mass*, which is, indeed, by far the most iniquitous of all, and which has drawn with it an endless train of abuses. He knows that he has here to contend with an

evil that has been firmly entrenched for many centuries, which has received universal approval, and which cannot be overthrown without changing almost the entire, present organisation of the Church (162).

He first of all argues against the conception of the Mass as the rendering of a good work. Starting with the words of Institution, he reiterates the principles previously announced, and is thus led to speak of the significance of the presence of the body of Christ in the bread. This he steadfastly maintains. The Mass or Sacrament of the altar is for him the testament of the departed Christ. This testament (163) is the promise of the forgiveness of sins, confirmed by His death. The Mass is essentially nothing more than the words of Christ in which He says, as it were, "Behold, condemned sinner, out of pure grace, I promise thee, before thou has merited anything, the forgiveness of all thy sins and eternal life. In order that thou mayest be sure of this, I will surrender My body and My blood, by which means I will, by death, confirm My promises. I will leave behind Me both My body and My blood as a sign and memorial to thee of this My promise. As oft as ye do this, remember Me, extol My love" (166).

God saves us, not by accepting our work, but by anticipating us with His promises. Nothing is required on our part but faith, supporting itself on this divine word (166).

From this consideration of the words of promise Luther is led again, just as in the sermons already reviewed, to the peculiar nature of the Sacrament as such. God is accustomed to affix signs or memorials to His promises. He accordingly attached to the highest promise of all the very body of Christ as a memorial sign. The Word in the Mass is the testament. The bread and the wine (together with the body therein contained) is the Sacrament. But the chief stress is still laid on the Word, and the remark is again added, that we can spiritually eat and drink at any hour by nourishing faith upon the words of Christ. Of this spiritual reception of the Supper, Luther has already spoken in an earlier portion of the tract, when discussing the question whether any argument for the administration of both elements could be drawn from the words of Jesus in John,

chapter vi. (144). He had there very decidedly pronounced against the application of that passage to the Sacrament, and in this connection had declared, "It is not the sacramental eating in which also the unworthy participate, but only the spiritual eating in faith, that quickens us." It is only the spiritual eating to which the words of the Lord, "Whoso eateth not the flesh . . . hath no life in him," can apply.

From this conception of the significance of the Mass, Luther now draws also the inference that it cannot be presented as a satisfaction for the dead, nor for any condition of distress. The Mass is a promise; and, as such, can be applied to none but the believer and to him alone, by virtue of his faith (176).

As an especial and yet greater offence he designates the conception of the Mass as a sacrifice offered to God, as it appears to be represented in the Canon of the Mass itself (176). Even Christ Himself, at the Institution of the Supper, did not offer Himself as a sacrifice to God, but, sitting at the Table, He announced to His disciples the testament, and offered to them the sign (177).

The Mass is more thoroughly Christian the more it resembles that first celebration, which was eminently simple, without pomp or ceremony. That the Mass, even when administered by an unworthy priest, is perfectly valid, he most readily concedes (180). Just so, he declares, is the gospel proclaimed by ungodly men, and to this he adds, "The Mass is really part of the gospel, and is, in fact, a short summary and epitome of the gospel" (180). Hence, all sermons should be nothing else but an exposition of the Mass.

The difference between a Sacrament and a sacrifice is thus concisely stated. "The former comes from God through the ministration of the priest and demands faith. The latter originates in our faith and ascends to God from Whom it demands a hearing."

The latter, at least, he adds, requires a worthy priest, inasmuch as God does not hear sinners (181).

IV

We have now traced Luther's teaching through the years 1518, 1519 and 1520. Yet we cannot say that up till now he has developed a consistent theory. "New and Old, Evangelical and Catholic, still exist alongside each other."¹

"These early works do not even show a consistent progress towards his later doctrine. Luther so far regards the Eucharist as a *beneficium*, and not as an *officium*. His great aim is to restore the Word to its right place in the Sacrament, and alongside the Sacrament, and to keep the Sacrament from being regarded as the vehicle of a higher grace than the Word."² Indeed in the *De Captivitate Babylonica* he asserts that he prefers to speak of only one Sacrament—"the Word," and several signs (147). Loofs³ regards this work as of primary importance for the elucidation of Luther's original sacramental teaching. That doctrine was still more clearly defined in 1523.

Here we enter upon the phase which Seeberg characterises as the *essen*. In this instance he had occasion to defend and justify his view of the presence of the body of Christ in face of the writings of the Bohemian Brethren.

V

It is difficult to discover what exactly were the opinions of these people on the Sacrament, but from Luther's discussion on them we learn that they were not in strict accordance with his own.⁴

The Bohemians seemed to be anxious to avoid as far as possible laying themselves open to the charge of denying the presence of the body altogether. They rejected transubstantiation, and declared that, with the words of consecration, there is immediately present the true (*verum*) body of Christ, but spiritually. He is not present personally with the natural substance of His body. In this

¹ Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 32.

² Watt, *Hastings' Ency. of Rel. and Ethics*; Hauck-Herzog, xx. p. 184.

³ Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 229.

⁴ Koestlin, *op. cit.* ii. p. 61 ff. Dieckhoff, *op. cit.* p. 238 and 453.

natural sense He will not be present on this earth till the Day of Judgment. With the actual substance of His body He has but one place, namely, at the right hand of God, the place to which He ascended before the eyes of His disciples. Christ with His actual body is not here, actually and corporeally. He is here spiritually and efficaciously.

On the other hand, they always expressly disavowed fellowship with those who regarded the Supper as a bare memorial feast, or the bread as merely "figuratively" the body of Christ dwelling in heaven.

Their view is a clear anticipation of the view of Calvin, and Luther, who never once publicly condemned the Genevan doctrine, dealt kindly with the interpretation of the Bohemian Brethren.

It is significant that these Waldenses or Picards, as Luther calls them, afterwards placed themselves in closer relations with Calvinism.

In these new circumstances, Luther was now compelled to mark out a clear line of discrimination between his own teaching and a theory of the Supper which opposed the entire doctrine of a bodily presence. He was not now combating Romish errors, but what seemed to him false teaching on the Reformation ground.

In the year 1523 he addressed to the Brethren the treatise *Vom Anbeten des heiligen Leichnams Christi*.¹ In the introduction, he refers to their Catechism which teaches that Christ is in the Sacrament not independently or naturally, and also that the Sacrament is not to be adored. He then proposes to consider how "so many frivolous spirits have taken offence at Christ's words of Institution, upon which everything depends." He does not designate the parties he has in mind, but he probably refers to the symbolical view suggested by Hoen.²

In the *first* place, for instance, he proceeds to say, some have held that there is simply bread and wine in the Sacrament, and that the bread only signifies the body of Christ, and likewise the wine, His blood. Against this, he presents the warning to which he, throughout the entire controversy concerning the Lord's Supper, constantly returns, namely, that we should let Reason go, and abide in simplicity on

¹ Erl. edit. 28. p. 388 ff.

² Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 328

the words of Christ Who will not deceive. It is a sacrilege to give a divine word, without a command from Scripture, any other than the natural signification. And that the bread is the body of Christ, is a statement which faith endures, and opposes in no single passage. If there be now nothing to compel faith to do otherwise, we must, as has been said, let every word stand in its natural significance. In all these discussions we have propositions around which was waged the succeeding controversy between Luther on the one hand and Zwingli and Oekolampadius on the other. Luther himself afterwards, in the midst of the controversy, referred to these earlier utterances, asserting that he had in his letter to the Waldenses already refuted the Significationists before anyone had ever thought that they were coming.

As a *second error of the Bohemians*, Luther instances their opinion based on I. Cor. x. 16 and 17, that the body is only the spiritual body of Christ, or the congregation.

According to this view, "the essence of the Sacrament consists merely in the incorporation into the spiritual body of Christ, while bread and wine are appointed as a certain sign for this incorporation, and for the exercise of this spiritual body. This spiritual body, whose head is Christ, is typified by the congregation."

In opposition to this teaching, Luther draws a clear line of distinction between the spiritual body of Christ, which we as believers constitute, and the natural body which is given and distributed for us in the Supper. Referring to I. Cor. x. 16, "The bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ?" he interprets it as follows: ¹

"When we eat such bread, we all together, each as much as the other, receive and enjoy, not simply bread, but the body of Christ." In the communion of the body of Christ, which Paul declares the bread broken by us to be, he sees a common enjoyment of the real natural body of Christ by all who break the bread, *i.e.*, who participate in the celebration of the Sacrament. Luther bases his view upon the apostle's declaration concerning the "breaking." "This," says he, "without doubt, means the handling of the Supper

¹ Erlang. ed. 28, p. 390 f. Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 328 f.

in giving and taking. Hence, the apostle is speaking of that communion which the breakers of the Sacrament, each one as much as the other, enjoy. He cannot, moreover, have in view that spiritual communion in the body of Christ, which the Bohemians assert, since that spiritual communion is not enjoyed by all who break the bread, although they all have part in the sacramental communion." Thus Luther not only finds in I. Cor. x. a testimony to the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament, but the passage conveys to him especially the idea that there is a reception of this body upon the part of such as are not spiritually united to Christ, *i.e.*, upon the part of everyone who, with other participants, receives the bread.

The doctrine that *unworthy* guests at the Communion also receive the body of the Lord is thus here plainly expressed. This doctrine was afterwards to prove a great stumbling-block in the way of union with the Swiss, and notwithstanding Bucer's mediating efforts, it prevented a general acceptance of the Wittenberg Concordia of 1536. But perhaps the *Anbeten des Sakraments des Heiligen Leichnams Christi* is chiefly noteworthy for its repeated emphasis on the Word—the *Hauptstück* of the Sacrament, inasmuch as it brings with it Christ with His flesh and blood and all that He is and has.

In conclusion, Luther says that the adoration (*Anbeten*) is admissible, but the best communicants are those who are already engaged with the words of the Sacrament. "Let one but exercise faith aright in the Word of the Sacrament, and the adoration will come in very suitably of itself."

So far we have been dealing with Luther's earlier utterances, but from the beginning of the controversy with Karlstadt his doctrine began to be more distinctive. On the negative side it had to be free from the errors and superfluous miracles of Rome, and on the positive side it had now to be developed against a theory which denied that the Sacrament was a means of grace at all, and, in particular, refused to allow any real presence of Christ in the Supper.¹

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 328.

B. LUTHER'S CONFLICT WITH KARLSTADT¹

Andrew Bodenstein of Karlstadt was a professor in Wittenberg, and had worked for some time in perfect harmony with Luther. When, however, Luther was in Wartburg, Karlstadt found the field open; and by the rashness of his character he carried not only the populace, but also the Council and University, into a most dangerous revolution. On Christmas Day, 1522, he celebrated the Lord's Supper, leaving out all the most essential features of the Roman Liturgy. Other sweeping reforms were in preparation, when Luther returned and restored order and quiet. The Zwickau Prophets had appeared in the town about the same time, and Luther always associated Karlstadt with this fanatical movement.

In the year 1525 there appeared Karlstadt's *Exposition of the words, "Hoc est corpus Meum."* In this work he positively denied that the presence of Christ in the Supper could be proved from Holy Scripture. In the sentence, "Take, eat; this (*touto*) is My body," he asserted that Christ pointed to His body in which He was sitting at the Table, and said of it, that it would now be given over to suffering and death. The taking and eating, he claimed, related to the bare bread. To the eating of the bread, then, the words of the Lord which follow ("Do this in remembrance of Me") refer. The word *touto* being neuter, cannot refer to *artos* (bread), which is masculine.

Luther could hardly be expected to accept this exegesis, but with much of Karlstadt's teaching he might have very well agreed. He explains his position clearly in a letter to the Christians of Strasbourg (15th December, 1524).²

"I will confess that had Dr. Karlstadt or anyone else been able five years ago to show me that there is nothing in the Sacrament but bread and wine, he would have done me very great service. My trials have been so severe, and my struggles so violent, that I would fain have escaped from them, as I well saw that I could thereby have given the

¹ *Schaff-Herzog*, vol. i. p. 405. Müller, D. K., *Luther und Karlstadt*, Tübingen, 1907.

² Ullmann, *The Reformers before the Reformation*, i. p. 511.

severest blow to the Papacy. . . . But I am shut up and cannot escape. The text is too strong for me, and will not suffer itself to be torn from its meaning by words."

In January, 1525, Luther replied to Karlstadt in *Wider die himmelischen Propheten*.¹ This new work is most important, containing as it does a refutation of the two arguments which claimed Luther's attention afterwards in his principal treatise against Zwingli in the year 1527.

(a) Karlstadt argued *firstly* that Jesus Himself declares in John vi. 63 that "His flesh profiteth nothing." Luther inquires of what profit, then, could that flesh of Christ have been to which the Lord is said to have pointed when He said *touto*. He demands, too, that a discrimination be made between "flesh" and "Christ's flesh." The saying in John vi. 63 is not to be referred to the flesh of Christ at all, but is to be interpreted in connection with the following declaration, *i.e.*, "that the words of Christ are spirit and life." By the flesh which "profiteth nothing" Christ accordingly meant a "carnal understanding" (*intellectus carnalis*) of these His divine words. "Flesh" here, as elsewhere in the Scripture, denotes the "carnal" disposition and will and understanding.

(b) The *second* argument of Karlstadt above referred to was that Christ would have to leave his place in heaven in order to enter into the bread, or, as Luther found the objection expressed by Karlstadt, "Christ would have to spring up at once (*aufspringen*), whenever summoned by the putrid breath of a drunken priest." In response, Luther refuses to hear anything of an interpretation according to which Christ "ascends and descends." He quotes Ephesians i. and 23, "The Church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all," declaring that Karlstadt does not understand the Kingdom of God and Christ, and how Christ is in all places, and according to this text, fills all things. He presses the case still further, showing that this same spirit would also have to contend that the Son of God, when He was in His Mother's womb, had been compelled to forsake heaven.

Luther thus places side by side the omnipresence of the exalted Christ (which was held to involve the possibility

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 329. Koestlin, *op. cit.* ii. p. 23, *passim*.

of His presence also in the Lord's Supper), and an existence in heaven which must be attributed to the God-Man, as continuing without interruption, even during the incidents attending the beginning of His Incarnation.

This is the first mention of an important positive element in Luther's teaching. A new tendency now became evident in his conception of the subject, especially in connection with the question as to the relation of the body and blood to the visible elements. The "sophistry and keen wit of Karlstadt and his horde" demanded to know how Christ could say of the bread, "This is My body." Luther had in a previous work used the illustration of the "glowing iron," and of the "two natures in Christ." He now proceeds to say that if this mode of speech does not satisfy them, they might avail themselves of the fact that the Scriptures make frequent use of the figure known as *Synecdoche*,¹ mentioning the whole of an object, when they mean to designate a part only. Thus, for example, Moses calls the Children of Israel "God's peculiar people," although in reality only the minority belonged to God or were His children. Thus, also, these very wise people might have interpreted the whole subject of which Christ speaks, *i.e.*, the bread and the body, as indicating the body alone, understanding Him as saying, "This is My body" without making any mention of the bread. The bread is indeed also present, but inasmuch as everything depends on the body, He speaks as if there were nothing there but the body.²

We see that by the *touto* Luther understood the bread, not, however, as bread alone, but as clearly marking a sacramental unity with the body of Christ, which sacramental unity exists before the words were spoken.

This mode of explanation by *Synecdoche* marks an epoch point in Luther's teaching. All throughout his later writings he maintained this content of the word *touto*. It seemed to him the only fully Christian one, and he always claimed that it was in accordance with the testimony of Holy Scripture.

¹ *Hauck-Herzog*, xx. p. 185.

² *Erl. edit.* xxix. p. 267.

CHAPTER IV

ZWINGLI'S TEACHING IN ITS THREE PERIODS

INTRODUCTION—THE THREE PERIODS

(A) Before he came into conflict with Luther in 1524 : Zwingli and the Mass—(B) Zwingli in conflict with Luther (1524-1529)—(C) Zwingli's return to his early, positive Teaching (1529-1531).

A. ZWINGLI'S TEACHING BEFORE 1524 : ZWINGLI AND THE MASS

Archeteles (1522)—18th Article of the 67 *Schlussreden*, January, 1523—*Auslegung der 67 Schlussreden*—Letter to Wyttenbach, June, 1523—Summing up of Zwingli's Teaching at this time—*De Canone Missae*, August, 1523—The Sources of Zwingli's Early Teaching : Erasmus.

Wider die himmelischen Propheten was Luther's reply to the writing of Karlstadt. But already two more formidable exponents of Eucharistic doctrine had appeared on the field. Zwingli the Luther of Switzerland, and Oekolampadius its Melancthon, had arrived at a different interpretation of the words of Institution from that of Karlstadt, and they were able to support it with exegetical and rational arguments.

Various points of Luther's teaching are first brought into prominence in his controversy with Zwingli and Oekolampadius, and our next task is to examine the early writings of Zwingli, before he came into conflict with the Theologian of Wittenberg.

This investigation into Zwingli's original teaching is all the more necessary, as it will be our aim to show that in Zwingli there is a more positive element than is usually associated with his name.

If we accept the conclusions of Doumergue¹ Dorner,² Köhler³ and Miéville⁴, we are able to assert that the description "Zwinglian" can not with justice be applied to Zwingli.

According to the general opinion, Zwingli made of the Supper a "pure symbol," a "mere memorial." Thus, for example, Seeberg, "The theory of Zwingli is simple. The bread and the wine are signs of the body and the blood of Christ, given for us, and they recall to us the work of Redemption. The word 'is' is synonymous with 'signifies.' Faith alone can apprehend salvation and appropriate it. But faith has to do only with spiritual entities. In consequence, to eat the body of Christ can only signify that we appropriate by faith the salvation acquired by the sacrifice of this body. In the Supper, Christ is present only by the contemplation of faith, and not essentially and really. 'Faith in Christ is really the eating of His body. The body is then eaten, when His death for us is believed' (iii. 595). If we would take the eating of the body of Christ seriously we would come into conflict, on the one hand, with the maxim, 'the flesh profiteth nothing,' and on the other hand, collide with the limitation of Christ's body to one place. Moreover, at the time of the Institution of the Lord's Supper, the blood of Christ had not yet been shed (iii. p. 333 f.). The Lord's Supper is thus, according to Zwingli, on the one hand, a memorial celebration, designed to remind us of the redemption wrought by the death of Christ. On the other hand, it is a profession of adherence to Christ in the presence of the congregation, and thus the assuming of an obligation to lead a Christian life" (iii. p. 601).⁵

Such is Seeberg's evaluation of Zwingli's Eucharistic doctrine. Doumergue, Dorner, Miéville, Köhler, Professor Orr and others, however, point the way to a more accurate description.⁶ The *Encyclopædia Lichtenberger*⁷ also sup-

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 351.

² Dorner, *op. cit.* i. p. 307.

³ Walter Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther*, p. 15.

⁴ Miéville, *La sainte Cène d'après Zwingli*, p. 26.

⁵ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 378.

⁶ Prof. Orr, *U.P. Magazine*, October, 1900.

⁷ *Encyclopædia Lichtenberger*, Article "Abendmahl."

ports this more favourable view. "It is said that Zwingli has insisted on the idea that the bread and wine are only symbols of the body and blood of Christ, and that the Eucharist Feast is a simple memorial, but one is able to quote easily numerous passages, where Zwingli calls the Supper 'the nourishment of the Christian soul.' In short, Zwingli defends the right of a healthy mysticism. His conception of the Supper does not merit the description of a vague and empty sign. In consequence, to reconstruct the dogma of the Supper, it is necessary to develop greatly the tradition of Zwingli."

Since Baur's two-volumed work, *Zwinglis Theologie, ihr Werden und ihr System* (1885-1889), it has been generally accepted that there was present from the beginning in Zwingli's theory of the Supper a certain antagonism to that of Luther.¹ Our contention is that there was in Zwingli's testimony a natural development through *three* clearly defined stages. We shall try to show that in the *First* period, when he was contending with the upholders of the Romish Mass, there were positive elements in his teaching which have been generally overlooked; that in the *Second* period, during his conflict with Luther, the negative element was predominant; but that, towards the end of his life, under the mediating influence of Bucer, he returned to the more positive views he held at the outset. This made it possible for him to approach as far towards Luther as he did at Marburg in 1529. It also explains the *Brief Exposition of Faith* to Francis I. of France in 1531—his "swan song,"² which is a near approach to the richer teaching of Calvin.

We, then, claim for Zwingli a natural development, and we sum up what we have to say of his first phase and period under the rubric—Zwingli and the Mass.

A. ZWINGLI AND THE MASS

Very early in his career did Zwingli realise that the Roman Catholic Mass did not conform to the original intention of the Supper. The first traces of his teaching

¹ Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 2. ² Schaff, *German Reformation*, ii. p. 677.

are found in the *Apologeticus Archeteles* (iii. 26-74), which dates from the year 1522. The Bishop of Constance had reproached him with wishing to introduce changes into the Church. "But," replies Zwingli, "if nothing is to be changed, why has the *Synaxis* (Communion) been changed or rather been mutilated? Formerly it was administered under both forms according to the Apostolic custom and Institution" (iii. p. 70). The Supper is thus from the beginning presented as connected with the Church. Immediately before this passage we read, "Faith is the only ground of salvation. 'For by a single offering, He has made the sanctified perfect for all time' (Hebs. x. 14)."

These words contain the seeds of all the subsequent development.

1st. The Mass cannot be a sacrifice.

2nd. It is faith which is essential in the Supper.

3rd. The Supper is in direct connection with the Church.

Here are the fundamental ideas of Zwingli on the Supper—ideas which, in the course of time, only became more definite and clear. It will be seen that he and Luther had different points of departure. Zwingli started from the Mass, Luther from the Eucharist.

In the 18th *Article of the 67 Schlussreden*, which he had prepared for the 1st Zurich Disputation (January, 1523), Zwingli now came forward boldly against the Sacrifice of the Mass. "Christ, Who offered Himself once on the Cross, is the sufficient and perpetual sacrifice for the sins of all believers. Therefore the Mass is no sacrifice, but a commemoration of the One sacrifice of the Cross, and a seal of the redemption through Christ" (i. 153).

Two points are here emphasised by Zwingli.

1st. The Supper is a commemoration of the unique sacrifice of Christ.

2nd. It is for the participator a seal or pledge by which he is assured of the redemption effected through Christ.¹

The discussion which took place at the Disputation on these points was very short, and the reasons advanced by the Roman Catholics were extremely feeble. Faber, wishing to prove that the Mass was in accordance with Scripture,

¹ Baur, *op. cit.* ii. p. 269.

quoted I. Cor. xi. 34. Zwingli refuted him by saying that St. Paul wished to impress upon the Corinthians that the Supper was not instituted to nourish the body but the soul (i. 147).

Faber next alleged that the Mass was a sacrifice, because the word "*missa*" meant "sacrifice" in the Hebrew. "But," replied Zwingli, "the Epistle to the Hebrews does not see any sacrifice in the Mass. Besides, the word '*missa*' comes neither from the Hebrew nor the Greek" (i. 148).

It is in the *Auslegung der 67 Schlussreden* (the development of the Articles), published in July, 1523, that we find for the first time a detailed exposition of the views of Zwingli on the Supper, in so far as they are opposed to the doctrine of the Mass (i. p. 169).¹

In the course of this discussion he informs pious souls that he has no wish to take from them the body of Christ and the Heavenly food, and that he is far from scorning the Holy Sacrament. He rather wishes to re-establish it, as God instituted it. He calls attention to the similarity of his doctrine to that of Luther. "I have on this account for some years called the enjoyment of this meal a commemoration of the suffering of Christ and not a sacrifice. But for some time past, Martin Luther has entitled this Meal a Testament, a name with which I willingly concur. For while he has named it according to its nature and property, I have named it according to its use and employment, and there is no contradiction between the two names."² And in general, Zwingli gives in the same exposition a solemn assurance to the simple-minded "that there is no dispute as to whether the body and blood of Christ are eaten and drunken, for no Christian has that in doubt, but the dispute is whether it is a sacrifice, or only a commemoration of a sacrifice" (i. p. 242).

In the 18th Article and in the exposition of it we have to observe two things, as Dorner says:

1st. The characteristic thing in Zwingli's writings at this period was his opposition to the conception of the Supper as a sacrifice or Mass.

¹ Miéville, *op. cit.* p. 26.

² Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 60 f. Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 20 f.

2nd. He distinctly represents the Supper as a Commemoration *and more*. It is in some sense an eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ. It is not only a commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ, but a renewal of the benefit of the sacrifice.¹

LETTER TO WYTTENBACH (VII. p. 297-300)

The Letter which Zwingli wrote to his former teacher, Thomas Wytttenbach, is of great importance for the knowledge of his views on the Supper at this time. It is dated 15th June, 1523.²

Wytttenbach had asked him his opinion on the Supper, especially on the subject of transubstantiation and the preservation of the sacramental elements. Zwingli replies to him: "Bread and wine are not transubstantiated, and profit nothing, if faith is not present. Faith is the essential thing in the Supper. Faith is the organ of appropriation. The Supper strengthens feeble faith, as the bread sustains the body. It makes the spirit joyous, as wine rejoices the heart of man. But it is necessary that he draw near the Holy Feast with faith, if he wishes to experience the salutary effects of it. Faith must be already present in the man. Otherwise, far from finding strength and joy, he eats his own condemnation, for he does not discern the Lord's body. That is to say, he does not see in the body and in the blood of Christ, that which they really are, our redemption and the washing away of our sins" (vii. 297).

What Zwingli affirms here of the Supper agrees with his general ideas of the Sacraments. The external signs have no value in themselves. It is faith which is the essential thing. If man had an immovable faith, he would have no need of the Sacraments, but if his faith is feeble, then he finds a support in them. "Advanced Christians will have no need of them," someone says. "That is true in the abstract," Zwingli replies, "but not in fact, for, the more advanced the Christian is, the more need he will feel of coming to the Table to enjoy the delights provided there."

¹ Dorner, *op. cit.* i. p. 300.

² Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 22 f. Miéville, *op. cit.* p. 35.

These delights he sees in a more intimate union with God. He cannot define this union. It is something which faith immediately experiences. It does not trouble itself to know *how* this union is effected. We see that in this *first* period of his teaching Zwingli attributes *objective* value to the Supper. The believer really receives something. What he receives is a strengthening and increase of his faith, and a sense and consciousness of a more intimate union and communion with God.

All this leads us to realise that *faith* for Zwingli is a very rich conception. It is nothing less than the "indwelling of God in us."¹ Faith is the totality of the operation of the divine Spirit in the heart of man. To believe is to give oneself to God. It is to sacrifice oneself in order to let God have full play in the soul. It is not mere intellectual apprehension. It is union with God (i. p. 556).

On the other hand, Luther defines faith as *fiducia*.² He analyses the idea of faith, and separates the different parts, while Zwingli reunites them in one indivisible synthesis. Zwingli does not separate faith and sanctification. For him faith is the whole of the new life in man.

The influence which their different views of faith will have on their conception of the Supper will be at once evident.

Luther rises gradually from the faith which grasps justification to works, to sanctification, and at last to the mystical union with Christ, which the believer finds in the Sacrament of the Supper.

But for Zwingli, all that is already given with faith.

The Supper will then necessarily have a different meaning for him than for Luther, and if one reproaches him, that from the point of view of the Lutheran doctrine his teaching is poor and insignificant, it is because one forgets that what one does not find in his Eucharistic teaching is already present in the riches and depth of his notion of faith.

In the Letter to Wyttenbach (viii. p. 298) it is clearly asserted that the influence which the Supper exercises on faith is real and living. It reanimates and strengthens it. The believer already possesses God by faith. It is not by means of the Supper that he attains to the possession, but

¹ Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 798. Dieckhoff, *op. cit.* p. 471.

² Professor MacKinnon, *op. cit.* p. 197.

that intimate union with God which is faith, is augmented in the Supper. The Lord's Supper is not an *officium* but a *beneficium*. There is a gift bestowed. If Luther had troubled himself to read Zwingli's writings, and had not been satisfied with the opinions of others regarding him, he would have formed a higher idea of the content of his teaching. In this early stage there were rich and positive elements in the testimony of Zwingli. Their different views of faith explain their different conceptions of the Supper. It is the profound and hidden cause. If the two Reformers did not arrive at an understanding on this doctrine, it was because they differed fundamentally in their views of faith.

We are now in a position to indicate in a *few propositions* the view of Zwingli as expounded by him in the year 1523, and we do so to emphasise the positive contents of his teaching.¹

(A) The Lord's Supper is not a repetition of the sacrifice of Christ, but a commemoration of the same.

(B) We obtain forgiveness of sins, not through the eating of Christ as sacrificed, but through faith in the sacrifice once offered.

(C) In the Lord's Supper we do not give. We receive.

(D) We receive the forgiveness of sins which Christ won for us through His death.

(E) Bread and wine are not a newly to be sacrificed body and blood of Christ. They are signs of the once broken body and blood of Christ.

(F) The Atonement once and for all offered by Christ for our sins is appropriated in the Supper through faith (*i.e.*, the life of Christ in us, and of us in Christ). Thereby Christ actually becomes our food, and nourishes the new life in us.

(G) This takes place, not in a physical manner through an entering of Christ into our body, but through a dwelling of Christ in our souls.

(H) In the Lord's Supper, Christ is really present for the believer, and is anew eaten by him as spiritual food.

¹ Ebrard, *Das Dogma vom heiligen Abendmahl*, ii. p. 105.

We find here the outline of the teaching of Calvin, although it must be granted that Zwingli insists more on the first *five* points than upon the last *three*. These last he merely hints at. Yet they are present in an embryonic state.

DE CANONE MISSAE (III. pp. 83-116) ¹

We see them more highly developed in the *De Canone Missae* of August 29th, 1523. In this work there were two clear and definite propositions.

(A) In the Lord's Supper we do not sacrifice or give to God. We receive from God.

(B) There are two soul-foods which we receive from God.

(a) The *Word of God* which is the content of the preaching of salvation.

(b) *Christ* Who gives Himself for our living and life-giving food in order to reproduce Himself in us.

As examples of the Eucharistic prayers, we find, "Do Thou feed our hungering souls with heavenly food. Our souls are spiritual, made in Thine image. Therefore they can only be refreshed with spiritual food. That food can be administered by Thy Word alone. In vain, would we eat the flesh of Thy Son, did we not firmly believe that Thy Son had atoned for our sins. Do Thou therefore, if our faith falters, increase our faith. Grant that, as Thy Son restored to us Thy grace through the shame and bitterness of the Cross, we also with Him as guide, may conquer the hardships and afflictions of this world, while we eat and drink His body and blood. Grant that we may approach Thy Son's most Holy Feast, of which he is the Host and also the Food (*hospes et epulum*). Grant, O Most merciful Father, through Thy Son Jesus Christ, that we may express Him in our deeds so that the image destroyed in Adam, may receive His likeness" (iii. 110). Here we have teaching which could hardly be designated by the popular epithet of "Zwinglian."

¹ Baur, *op. cit.* ii. p. 284 f.

(A) The *unio mystica* is clearly and plainly defined.

(B) The Lord's Supper is described as an action of renewed communion with Christ, and the bread and wine are seals of this communion.

(C) This strengthening and renewal of communion with Christ should have its practical, ethical results. It should be expressed in the actions of our lives.

The spiritual and ethical utterances of the *De Canone Missae* show the high-water mark of Zwingli's earlier testimony, and when we examine into the sources from which this teaching was derived, we are led back to the influence of Erasmus, the great Humanist.¹ Like Luther, Zwingli served himself heir to the writings of the earlier theologians, but he did not go to the Scholastics, Occam, Biel, or D'Ailly, as the German Reformer had done. There are some who assert that already at Glarus,² he had become acquainted with the works of Wicklif and Ratramnus. But Ratramnus was rather the forerunner of Calvin, as we shall try to prove later in this work. Köhler in his recent book³ indicates many parallel utterances in the expressions of Zwingli and Erasmus, and finds in the latter's *Paraphrasen zum N.T.* some of Zwingli's best known thoughts. "In short," he concludes, "The ground elements of his Eucharistic teaching are to be found in the great Humanists, the arrangement of material; the emphasis on Faith; the real presence in its mystic form; the ethical element, and the commemorative aspect." All this is related to the period we have just been considering.

But now a new note can be detected in his teaching. This is commonly acknowledged, and is usually attributed to the influence of the writings of Wessel Gansfort, and of a letter of the Dutchman Hoen, which contained a new interpretation of the words of the Institution of the Supper. An important critical question arises as to the exact time when Zwingli received this new influence.

¹ Lindsay, *History of the Reformation*, p. 355. Usteri, "*Zwingli und Erasmus*," in *Studien und Kritiken*, p. 666 f.

² Schaff, *Swiss Reform*, ii. p. 620. ³ Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 51.

CHAPTER V

B. ZWINGLI'S MIDDLE PERIOD (1524-1529)

Sources of the teaching of this period : Hoen and Wessel—Zwingli's Letter to Alber, 16th November, 1524—*De vera et falsa religione*, March, 1525—Letter to Oekolampadius—The Subsidium and Zwingli's Dream : Am Grüt—Summing up of Zwingli's teaching at this time.

HOEN AND WESSEL GANSFORT

Most authorities, with the exception of Dorner,¹ are agreed that in his later writings the Eucharistic doctrine of Zwingli shows signs of the predominating influence of Hoen and Wessel. Our contention is that Zwingli first knew the work of Hoen much later than has been generally understood. In this we accept the recent critical results of Loofs,² O. Clemen,³ Paul Wernle, and Doumergue.

If it can be clearly proved that Hoen's influence only pertained in Zwingli's middle period (1524-1529), we shall find some support for our assertion that there is a positive element in the earlier phase of his teaching (1522-1524).

The important question to be decided is—When did the Letter of Hoen come into Zwingli's hands? Baur, accepting the conclusions of Schulze and Dieckhoff, would place it as early as 1521.⁴

This date is much too early, as Loofs,⁵ Clemen,⁶ Stähelin⁷ have recently shown. Zwingli writes in the *Responsio ad Johannis Bugenhagii Pomeraniam Epistolam* (23rd October,

¹ Dorner, *op. cit.* i. p. 311.

² Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 808, note.

³ Clemen, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, xviii. p. 346 f.

⁴ Baur, *op. cit.* ii. p. 279.

⁵ Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 802, note.

⁶ Clemen, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, p. 346 f.

⁷ Stähelin, *Zwingli*, p. 372. Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 62 f.

1525), "It happened through the goodness of God that two pious and learned men, whose names I shall not mention, came to our Leo and me for the purpose of a conference on the question of the Lord's Supper. When they heard our opinion on this matter, they thanked God and communicated to us the letter of a learned and pious Dutchman" (iii. p. 606).

These words assert, as Loofs first showed, that Leo Juda was then secular priest in Zurich. But Leo did not enter upon this office till 2nd February, 1523. Before this date Zwingli cannot have had the letter of Hoen in hand. The name of the writer of the letter Zwingli first mentions in the *Responsio ad Theobaldi Billicani et Urbani Rhegii Epistolas* of 17th April, 1526 (iii. p. 648).

The names of the bringers of the letter he first mentions in the *Amica Exegesis* of 25th February, 1527. "From the Dutch Hoen, whose letter Rhodius and Saganus brought to me, I first received the elucidation, that '*est*' means '*significat*'" (iii. p. 553).

The terminus *a quo* being thus fixed, what of the terminus *ad quem*? Zwingli acknowledges his indebtedness to the letter of Hoen for the elucidation that "*est*" means "*significat*." This definite declaration of Zwingli cannot be doubted, and he first comes forward with this interpretation in the *Letter to Alber* on 16th November, 1524.

Between these limits, then (2nd February, 1523, and 16th November, 1524), we place the reception of Hoen's Letter.

Ullmann¹ would trace the influence of Hoen's teaching even in the Letter to Wyttenbach (15th June, 1523), and the earlier writings, but there is no mention of the symbolical interpretation of "*est*" till the *Letter to Alber* in 16th November, 1524. Erasmus was the dominating influence until then. We shall now examine the documents of Wessel and Hoen as sources of the teaching of Zwingli in his second period.²

John Wessel (1420-1489) was the author of a long and elaborate treatise, *De Sacramento Eucharistiae*, in which he

¹ Ullmann, *Reformers before the Reformation*, ii. p. 525.

² Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 803.

taught that the Lord's Supper is the rite in which the death of Christ is presented to and appropriated by the believer. It is, above all things, a commemoration of the death, and a communion or participation in the benefits which followed. The communion with the spiritual presence of Jesus is of far more importance than any corporeal contact with the body of Christ, and that communion is shared in through faith.¹

These thoughts were taken over by Christopher Hoen,² a divine of the Netherlands, who, in the letter just discussed, founds his argument on the sayings of Christ in John, chap. 6.

Hoen's Letter may be summed up in the following propositions :

I. Starting from John, chap. 6, the Lord's Supper is essentially a pledge that Jesus Christ has given Himself for our salvation.

II. This is only through faith and for faith, for by faith alone can we contemplate and feed upon Christ.

III. Christ gives Himself to us in the Holy Supper, not indeed in a sensible way, as if He were here or there, or as if the bread and wine were transmuted into His flesh and blood, but in such a way that the bread remains bread, though at the same time *signifying* the body of Christ.

IV. Christ's oblation, vouchsafed afresh in the Supper to every individual and received by him through faith, is the ground of salvation.

The opinions of Hoen and Wessel did not appeal to Luther. He published the works of the latter, but he omitted the treatise *De Sacramento Eucharistiae*. The Dutch writings, no doubt, incited Karlstadt to elaborate his peculiar theory, which, however, diverges from the views expressed by them in many important particulars.

Zwingli it was who received the most positive impression, and we shall see the results of this in the letter he wrote to Alber which is dated 16th November, 1524.

¹ Lindsay, *op. cit.* p. 355. Miller and Scudder, *John Wessel of Gansfort*.

² Ullmann, *op. cit.* ii. p. 536 f.

LETTER TO ALBER (III. 589-603)

The letter was occasioned by a controversy that had arisen in Reutlingen between the pastors, Hermann and Alber. In the dispute between Luther and Karlstadt, Alber had taken the side of Luther, while Hermann was a partisan of Karlstadt. Zwingli, having learned that they proposed to hold a public disputation, wrote to Alber to dissuade him. He asserts in his letter that Hermann was wrong in embracing the views of Karlstadt, but he shows that Alber himself is in error in taking literally the words of Institution.

This letter is very important, as it was the means of inflaming Luther against its author.¹

The letter to Alber contains two parts.

(a) A *Negative* part which shows that Jesus Christ expressly rejects the corporal manducation.

(b) A *Positive* part which explains the words of Institution.

(a) Zwingli, faithful to his hermeneutical principles that Scripture is its own best interpreter, seeks for a passage which throws light on the obscure phrase, "This is My body." He finds it in John, chap. 6.

"It is true that Jesus does not speak there of the Supper directly, but His discourse contains a refutation of the literal interpretation of the words of Institution. If John, chap. 6, does not give an explanation of these words, it at least indicates how *not* to understand them. It furnishes the correct point of view from which to examine them" (iii. 593).

Zwingli calls this chapter an "immovable battle front."

The decisive passage is verse 63, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth. The flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."²

"The error of those who maintain a transubstantiation and of those who maintain a bodily eating, is rendered perfectly apparent by those words. This passage is the unsurmountable barrier. 'The flesh profiteth nothing.' Shall we say then, that Christ has given that which profiteth

¹ K. J. Jäger, *And. Bodenstein von Karlstadt*. Miéville, *op. cit.* p. 58. Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 72.

² Miéville, *op. cit.* p. 61. Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 76 ff.

nothing? By no means. But Christ tells us that which profits when He says, 'The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.' What words? 'He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood, hath eternal life.' What flesh and what blood? Not the natural flesh or the natural blood, but the flesh and the blood which we know, are the pledges of our salvation, because they died for us on the Cross. Faith alone justifies. It is then faith in Christ crucified, which Jesus understands by these words, 'words which are spirit and life.' In speaking of the manducation of His body, Christ understands faith in His expiatory death. There can be no question, then, of a corporal manducation" (iii. 596). That is the positive result which the exposition of John, chap. 6, has furnished to Zwingli.

(b) But how are the words of the Institution to be explained?

Zwingli begins by refuting the peculiar opinion of Karlstadt, whose zeal, however, he praises, because he has acknowledged that salvation comes through faith in Christ, not from the sacramental bread and wine, and in consequence has taken the words of Institution in a figurative way. "We," he says, "consider that the hinge of the matter is found in the little word '*est*.' " The word *est* is often taken for *significat*, as one sees in Genesis xli. 26. If we replace *est* by *significat* the words of Christ become quite clear, and give a sense like this: "This Feast is a symbol, by means of which, you will remember that My body, the body of the Son of God has been given for you. This Feast signifies My sacrifice" (iii. 597). Here we find the first clear indication that Zwingli has been influenced by the writing of Hoen. Hoen's interpretation of the words of Institution are definitely accepted. Zwingli concludes his letter, summing up the points which seem to him to be important.

1st. The Supper is a memorial in which we celebrate the death of Christ, and by which we make profession of our faith and unite in one single body.

2nd. But we eat our own condemnation, if before eating we are not already certain by faith that Christ has saved us (iii. 602).

This *resumé* shows that at this moment Zwingli emphasised the subjective side of the Supper. He does not speak of it at all as a means of grace. He does not say a word of the union into which the believer enters with the Living Christ. "Faith in Christ is really the eating of His body. The body of Christ is eaten, when His death for us is believed" (iii. 595).

We do not say that by these words Zwingli denies the mystical union of the believer with Christ. He does not deny this union, but he regards it rather as a consequence of *faith* than as a direct result of participating in the Supper. Another remark presents itself with regard to the interpretation of the *est* as *significat*, and it is this. This interpretation is not the point of departure of the exegesis of Zwingli, as has been so often pretended. It is his *point d'arrivée*, as Miéville¹ asserts. It is not the basis of his exegesis. It is its "last word, its crown."

DE VERA ET FALSA RELIGIONE COMMENTARIUS
(III. 147)

This teaching is similarly propounded in the *De vera et falsa religione* which appeared in March, 1525. The chapter which deals with the Supper is only a new edition, considerably augmented, of the *Letter to Alber*.

Zwingli begins by making a detailed exegesis of John, chap. 6, in order to show that in this chapter it is a question of faith, and not of the Supper. He then formally declares that he rejects all kinds of material presence of the body of Christ (iii. 241).

After having refuted the opinion of Karlstadt (iii. 253), he undertakes the exposition of the phrase, "This is My body."

What is the sense of the passage, if one emphasises the *est* and explains it as *significat*? he asks. He examines the account of the Supper which Luke and Paul give us, and comments on the words that relate to the cup. "This cup is the new testament in My blood."

These words do not say, "This (this cup) is My blood." It is clear that they do not take the *est* substantially,

¹ Miéville, *op. cit.* p. 67.

but give an interpretation of the words of Mark and Matthew. The words, then, relating to the cup being taken symbolically, it is necessary that the parallel passage relating to the bread be also taken symbolically (iii. 257). He concludes the exegetical section by quotations from the Fathers who reject the corporal presence of Christ in the Supper. These are Tertullian, Augustine, Origen, Hilary, and Jerome, all of whom he claims for his own (iii. 264).

In a Letter which Zwingli wrote to Oekolampadius on 5th April, 1525,¹ a little time after the publication of his *Commentarius*, he mentions *two objections* which one might make to his theory, and which later were effectively made on the part of the Lutherans (vii. 389).

The *First* is that in John, chap. 6, the word *caro* means *intellectus carnalis*. "But," replies Zwingli, "the context does not permit of this sense."

The *Second* is that "God, being all-powerful, can effect that the bread be at the same time flesh." "But that is a pure sophism, and one might as well say that God can effect that a leper be at the same time, leprous and pure."

On April 11th, 1525, Zwingli, supported by Leo Juda, asked the Senate of Zurich to formally repeal the Mass.

This proposal was discussed for two consecutive days in the Senate, and was finally adopted. The most formidable adversary in these debates was the Secretary, Am Grüt,² a moderate man, and a friend of Reform, but one who did not desire a complete rupture with the Roman Catholic Church. He made a strong attack on Zwingli's interpretation of the words of the Institution. He pointed out that the examples quoted to support the figurative use of the word *est* were always taken from the parables, while Jesus did not speak in parables when He dispensed the Supper. Zwingli felt that these remarks had some foundation, and to reply to them, and to fill up some gaps in the argument of the *Commentarius*, he wrote the *Subsidium* in August, 1525 (iii. 326).

¹ Miéville, *op. cit.* p. 76.

² Miéville, *op. cit.* p. 77. Baur, *op. cit.* ii. p. 312.

SUBSIDIUM

In the *Second* part of this work, he mentions *two* new reflections which have occurred to him since the publication of the *Commentarius*.

First (iii. p. 328), we find in Scripture that the words "Body of Christ" are taken in *three* different senses. They designate in one case the *natural* body of Christ, that was born of the Virgin, and which died on the Cross.

Again, they designate Christ's *risen* body, and again, Christ's *mystical* body, which is the Church.

Which of these bodies did Christ give to His disciples to eat when He said, "Take, eat, this is My body"? Plainly, it was not His natural body. Jesus could not enjoin His disciples to eat it and to bruise it with the teeth, since He had declared positively that the "flesh profiteth nothing." There could, on the other hand, be no question of eating Christ's risen body, because, at the time of the Institution of the Supper, Christ had not yet been raised. Finally, there was no question of eating the mystical body of Christ, for it had not then been delivered unto death.

We must therefore understand the words, "This is My body" figuratively.

The *second* important discovery which Zwingli has made since the publication of the *Commentarius* is that of an exact analogy between the Institution of the Supper and that of the Passover. The manner in which he made this discovery is very curious.¹ We have seen how Am Grüt reproached him for quoting parables in support of the symbolical interpretation. This objection seemed to impress Zwingli, for, as soon as the discussion was ended, he began to search for a passage which would provide an exact analogy with the words of the Supper, and which would have no connection with a parabolic saying. He reflected deeply and turned over his Bible page by page, but in vain. The night wore on, and he could not find a single instance. At last he retired to rest, but his thoughts continued to occupy his mind while he slept. He had a dream in which he saw some one approach him and say to him, "Why do

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 146.

you not quote Exodus xii. 11? 'It is the Lord's Passover'" (iii. 341). Immediately he leapt from bed, opened his Bible; read the passage, and preached next day with such impressiveness that the most conscientious spirits were won for the Reformation, and Catholicism ceased to rule in Zurich.¹ In the *Subsidium* Zwingli brings forward this new example, and considers it to be the most decisive proof of the symbolical interpretation. Scripture itself admits it, for St. Paul regards the Passover as a symbol of the death of Christ. "Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us" (I. Cor. v. 7). And Jesus Himself makes allusion to the Passover immediately before instituting the Supper. Zwingli concludes this second section of his work, drawing a parallel between the two institutions down to the smallest detail (iii. 343). *He has found a new reinforcement for his doctrine.*

He sums up the argument of the *Subsidium* with the following reflection. "If a thing as gross as the corporal eating has not been imposed on a people as gross as the Jews of the Old Covenant, how would it be imposed on us who possess the Spirit, and who have passed from darkness into light?" (iii. 356).

If we now evaluate his general position in a few sentences, we find that of faith in general he says that it involves a dwelling of Christ in us. Of the Supper in particular he says that it is related to the One Sacrifice of Christ as a commemoration, while bread and wine are symbols of the broken body and shed blood of Christ. He had said earlier in the *De Canone Missae* that the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine are at the same time a symbol and pledge of a contemporaneous, renewed fellowship with Christ, but he now lets this side of his teaching sink into the background, even before his controversy with Luther.

The question as to what the Supper means for the subjective life of faith of the individual is not now raised by him. He dwells only on the relation of the Sacrament to the death of Christ as a collective action on the part of the Church. It is thus only a partial solution, but the same one-sidedness is also seen in the testimony of Luther.

¹ Miéville, *op. cit.* p. 80.

So far had Zwingli's teaching been developed before it came into contact with Luther's. He had only been attacking Papists up till now, for even the *Letter to Alber*, although written in relation to Luther and Karlstadt, was only a development of his own thesis, and not an attack on another. He says nothing about Luther's teaching. He only refers to it negatively and indirectly. Not by the Swiss, but by the Germans, was the glove thrown.¹

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 155.

CHAPTER VI

B. ZWINGLI'S MIDDLE PERIOD—*Continued*

ZWINGLI AND OEKOLAMPADIUS IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH LUTHER

Controversy begun by the Epistle of Bugenhagen, 1525—Zwingli's Response to Bugenhagen—Oekolampadius' Work . . . *De genuina verborum . . . expositione*—The *Swabian Syngamma* by Brenz, . . . Precursor of Calvin—Oekolampadius' *Antisyngamma*—Strasbourg's Attempt to Mediate—Pirkheimer poisons the mind of Luther—Luther's *Vorrede zum Syngamma*—Oekolampadius' Reply to Bugenhagen—Zwingli's *Klare Unterrichtung vom Nachtmahl Christi*, in answer to Luther's *Vorrede*—Nestorianism in Zwingli's Teaching—Luther's *Sermon vom Sakrament des Leibes und Blutes Christi, wider die Schwarmgeister* . . . 29th March, 1526—Zwingli's Correspondence with Haner . . . *Alloeosis*—Zwingli's *Amica Exegesis*—Zwingli's *Freundlich Verglimpfung*—Zwingli's Letter to Luther—Luther's *Dass diese Worte . . . noch feststehen* . . . May, 1527. Zwingli's *Dass diese Worte ewig den alten Sinn haben werden* . . . June, 1527—Discussion of these Writings, involving the questions of Ubiquity, Christology, *Communicatio Idiomatum*, and the *Alloeosis*—The Position before Marburg—Summing up of the Teaching of Luther and Zwingli at this time—Disputation at Bern. Zwingli's View, upheld.

AMONG the eminent teachers of Wittenberg was Bugenhagen, who had been a champion of the Reformation in Pomerania. He was of one mind with Luther on the question of the Lord's Supper, and had heard that Zwingli explained the *est* as *significat*. He now wrote a letter to Dr. Hess and had it printed under the title, *Contra novum errorem de sacramento corporis et sanguinis Christi*.¹ In this letter the writer shows a complete ignorance of Zwingli's services to the Reformation, and of the clarity and purity of his teaching. He portrays him as an unlettered fellow who was wont to pose as a theologian. Bugenhagen's writ-

¹ Baur, *op. cit.* ii. p. 313.

ing is an echo of Luther's against Karlstadt. He can only have read Zwingli's works very superficially, if he had ever read them at all. He always blames him for building his teaching on the fact that *est* means *significat*. What, as we have seen, was the last stone on Zwingli's edifice, Bugenhagen regards as the foundation stone.

Zwingli now wrote a *Responsio ad Bugenhagii epistolam* (1525) (iii. 604). It was composed in a different style and spirit, and is an illustration of the Humanist form of argument in contrast to the Scholastic method of polemic. He limits himself to a quiet refutation of the objections Bugenhagen brings against him. He exhorts Bugenhagen not to disturb the peace of the Church, but to consider how Rome will gloat over any disunion in the young Church of the Reformation. Almost simultaneously with the *Responsio* appeared a contribution from Oekolampadius of Basel, *De genuina verborum Domini expositione*.¹

In the very beginning of his treatise Oekolampadius takes occasion to vindicate himself against the charge which Luther was always ready to make against the opponents of the bodily presence of Christ in the Supper. He declares that it is not the intention of persons who oppose this doctrine to rid Christianity of all that is wonderful and mysterious, *i.e.*, to rationalise it. There are certainly mysteries, he affirms, which surpass our reason. But it is one thing to recognise these mysteries and another to put in mysteries which were not originally there. The Lord's Supper, it is true, may in a certain sense be called a mystery. It is a mystery because it conserves a religious idea under a sensuous covering. (Symbol and Mystery are cognate terms.) The Lord's Supper is designed to lead us from the visible to the invisible. But from this very fact, it cannot itself be something secret and mysterious. That which is intended for our edification must not be an unknown thing. The Apostles do not speak of the first celebration of the Supper in such wise as to convey to us the impression that it was something hidden and secret. The disciples do not manifest the slightest astonishment when the Lord offers them the bread and the wine. They partake of the repast simply as a Passover. If Peter objected to the Master's

¹Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 162.

washing of his feet, how much more strongly would he have objected if the Lord had really proposed to him to eat His Flesh?

The most valuable part of Oekolampadius' work is that which deals with the Patristic testimony. He finds that his views are held by the Fathers of the Church, especially Tertullian, Chrysostom, and Augustine. It was reserved for the Middle Ages, as he demonstrates, to make this simple transaction a subject of superstitious veneration.¹

The *final* section is devoted to an explanation of the sacramental words (i.).

Of the fact that they contain a trope, every unprejudiced person must be convinced. It is not difficult to cite similar instances from the Scripture, as, for example, where John is called Elias in the sense of representing Elias. Thus the bread is called the body in the sense of the *figure* of the body. And as the bread that serves to nourish man's body is broken, so Christ's body is broken, in order to the feeding of the soul with heavenly food.

Had Christ meant that we should eat His body *In* the bread, He would have expressed Himself more clearly to the effect, saying, "*In* this bread is My body," whilst as it is, He really says, "This is My body." Thus Oekolampadius saw in Luther's apprehension of this passage a departure from the simple meaning of the sacramental words.

The passage in which Jesus speaks of eating His body and drinking His blood (John vi.) bars the way to every material conception of the words of Institution. Of a bodily presence of Christ, since His exaltation into Heaven, the Scriptures say nothing. In fact, the contrary is affirmed. Not until the last day will the Lord appear again in the body. Till then we must think of Him as in Heaven. Our faith is thus directed to Christ and His reconciling Passion, and not to a participation in His body in the Lord's Supper. In the Mass Canon itself the eyes of Christians are directed to Heaven by the *sursum corda*.

In Oekolampadius' writing we see an opinion almost identical with that of Zwingli. Both teach the symbolical

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 166. Dieckhoff, *op. cit.* p. 523. Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 117 ff.

interpretation of the words of Institution. Both deny the corporal presence, and hold that Christ's body is at the right hand of God in Heaven. Oekolampadius sent his writing to the Swabian Preachers with a letter in which he warned them against dissensions in the ranks of the Reformers.¹

SYNGRAMMA SUEVICUM²

These Swabian Preachers, the most of whom regarded Oekolampadius as their spiritual father, now published an answer written by Brenz, and signed by his colleagues and by himself. This was issued in 1525, under the title of the *Syngramma Suevicum*. The Syngramma is, of course, directed against Oekolampadius and his view of the bread as a mere figure of the body of Christ. The Swabian ministers see in the rise of this symbolical theory a scheme of the devil, who seeks by this means to snatch away from the believer the true body of Christ. The leading thought of the Syngramma is a following up of Luther's doctrine of the Word. God is the Word, and therein makes Himself comprehensible to the spirit, so that grace, which is eternal and irrespective of space, comes nigh unto us in order to communicate itself to our souls.

The Syngramma, like Luther, approves the Augustinian maxim, "*accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum.*"³ Words are in general not merely signs of absent things, but, according to Aristotle, they convey the matter itself. Thus the words of Christ bring Christ along with them. The words of Christ, in the formula of the Institution, put the very body and blood of Christ into the bread and wine, just as the word of Moses imparted a healing power to the brazen serpent. The serpent remains a serpent, but has healing power, by virtue of the Word which is connected with it. And just as in this case, the Word has brought with it to the serpent the healing power, so the body itself is brought into the bread through the Word, "This is My body."

¹ Baur, *op. cit.* ii. p. 328.

² Dieckhoff, *op. cit.* p. 566. Ritschl (O.), *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus* (1908).

³ Augustine, *Tractat.* 80 in *Joannem*.

But now the difference between Luther and the Syngramma becomes apparent, when the question is raised—Do the words of the Sacrament bring with them the body and blood of Christ for *every* recipient of the Sacrament? The answer of the Syngrammists is a complete denial. The spiritual benefits which the words of Institution bring are only for faith.

The body and blood of Christ are food for the soul. The connection between the body and the elements does not benefit the *unbelieving*. The body and blood of Christ are indeed offered to them, but the offering is one thing and the receiving is another. To the proposition that the Word makes God present is appended the second thesis, that faith in believing makes God present.¹

Thus the Syngrammists know nothing of a participation merely with the *mouth*. They do not recognise that which Luther calls "bodily participation," but only that which he designates a "spiritual" eating of the body.

On the other hand, they agree with Luther in their reply to the question whether Christ does not remain in Heaven. He remains, they declare, in Heaven, although He is at the same time, by virtue of His command and Word, distributed among His followers on earth. He is ascended into Heaven, but in another sense He is everywhere, as He Himself has said that He is with us always until the end of the world.

He comes to us, and yet remains at the right hand of God. The Holy Spirit also is in the saints below, and united with Christ at the right hand of the Father. Why should it then be thought a strange assertion that the deified body of Christ likewise comes through the Word into the bread, and yet at the same time remains at the right hand of God?

In the very beginning of the *Syngramma* the writers refute the interpretations of Zwingli and Oekolampadius, and yet when we compare their teaching with that of the *De Canone Missae* we see many points of contact. Perhaps Ebrard is right when he says, "The Syngramma is a development of Zwingli at his best. What is embryonic in Zwingli came to its fruition in Brenz. There was the same emphasis on a living union with Christ, and on the appropriation of His

¹ Dieckhoff, *op. cit.* p. 607. Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 117.

merits. While, however, Zwingli dwelt on the significance of the Sacrament for the Christian Community, Brenz dwelt on its meaning for the subjective life of faith of the individual man. By this means the Syngramma unites the view of Zwingli with the view of Luther. In Brenz we find first that teaching which Bucer shared, and which later reached its full development in Calvin and Melanchthon."¹

Oekolampadius, against whom the writing had been directed, took up the challenge, and in his *Antisyngamma*² gave a detailed answer to the arguments of the Swabians. He replied at length to the criticism of his exegesis, and asserted that the analogy of the "brazen serpent" proved no more than a presence in the Sacrament similar to that in the Word. In one respect the Syngramma controversy is important, as we have here raised for the first time the question of the *Ubiquity* of Christ's body—a question which was to loom largely in the succeeding period.

Oekolampadius had appealed to the Ascension as an argument against the local presence. The Syngramma tried to show that in spite of the Ascension, Christ's body can be present in the bread. The question was, of course, not gone into fully, as in later arguments, but here we have the germ of much subsequent controversy.

ZWINGLI AND LUTHER

We have now come to the point when the two great antagonists, Luther and Zwingli, came into direct conflict with each other. It was the Strasbourgers who, attempting to act as mediators, fanned the flame they wished to quench.³ They wrote soothing letters to Zwingli and Oekolampadius. To Luther they sent an envoy, Chaselius, who begged that the tie which bound the Reformers might not be severed on account of one difference in doctrine. They had a right to mediate, as their own teaching contained the elements of a higher unity between the Swiss and the Lutherans. They had emphasised the thought of a real, living union with Christ, and had not subordinated

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 175.

² Dieckhoff, *op. cit.* p. 637. Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 135.

³ Baur, *op. cit.* ii. p. 330.

this to a mere relation of the Sacrament to the death of Christ. They ascribed to these two elements equal rights. Luther sent Chaselius back with a letter of 31st October, 1525, which contained hard words. "No understanding is possible," he said, "for either we or they must be wrong. One or the other must be the servant of the devil." This hardness on the part of Luther has been explained by Ebrard as arising largely from the mistaken views he held of the Swiss. These views had been coloured by the influence of Pirkheimer. He had been a friend of Oekolampadius, but a violent controversy arose between them on the subject of the Supper.¹ Pirkheimer poisoned the mind of Luther against the Swiss, and he misled him as to the exact nature of the views of Zwingli and Oekolampadius.

VORREDE ZUM SYNGRAMMA ²

In the *Vorrede* of autumn, 1526, Luther now openly joined in the conflict. Karlstadt, Zwingli, and Oekolampadius are all classed as Fanatics, and the Fanatics must be wrong, he thinks, because they are so much divided among themselves. He attempts no refutation of their interpretations, and this is explained by the fact that he had never actually read their writings, but had merely accepted the verdict of Pirkheimer concerning them. It is notable, however, that the Syngamma was warmly welcomed by him. In the preface to the second edition he writes, "This excellent little book I like better the longer I read it, because I know how they are assailing it, and yet accomplishing nothing by their assaults, for it is truth, and puts the lies to shame." And yet we have seen how far the contents varied from his own theory. It is inconceivable also that he, while bestowing so much attention upon it, should not himself have become aware of the variations referred to. We cannot therefore but regard it as significant that he should, in all his references to it, have ignored these differences, rejoicing in the valuable aid of men like-minded, in the struggle against the common foes. The decisive consideration, however, in awakening this sense of fellowship with them was, beyond doubt, the zeal with which they maintained

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 193.

² Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 283.

the character of the Sacrament as a *divine, objective real gift of grace*, as over against the view that the part of the individual participating is but a subjective faith. We have already seen in the case of the Bohemian Brethren how mild is Luther's judgment, and how tolerant he is of any theory of the Supper which describes it as a gift. We shall see later how this explains his attitude to Calvin, who differed from him in much, but against whom he never spoke a condemnatory word.

Calvin also laid stress on the Sacrament as a gift to the believing soul. The *Vorrede*, as we have seen, was more polemical than didactic. Karlstadt, Oekolampadius, and Zwingli were attacked. Karlstadt retracted his opinion, but Oekolampadius and Zwingli retaliated in defensive writings. Oekolampadius wrote mildly in the *Fustum Responsum*,¹ while Zwingli issued the *Klare Unterrichtung vom Nachtmahl Christi* (ii. 426).

This work appeared on 2nd February, 1526, and was written in German. Hitherto he had written in Latin, but now that his writings had been banned by Luther, and that he himself had been named a heretic, he wished to justify his position in the eyes of common men.

He arranges his matter under *four Articles*.

In the *First Article* he describes the *three* different false views of the Supper, the *Romish*, the *Lutheran-Syngrammist*, and the *Erasmic*.

The *Roman Catholic view* is countered with familiar arguments, while the *Lutheran-Syngrammist* consubstantiation, in that *est* means *continet*, is shown to be as figurative as the interpretation of the so-called Fanatics.

In the *Second Article* five reasons are adduced why the *est* should not be understood substantially. The first *two* add nothing to the *Commentarius* and the *Subsidium*.

The *third proof* (ii. 448), however, of the *Second Article* is most important, as we meet here for the first time with these passages in Zwingli's teaching which have been used in charging him with *Nestorianism*. He adduces as his *third proof* the three phrases in the Apostles' Creed:—
"Ascended into heaven; Sitting at the right hand of God; From whence He will come to judge the quick and the

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 218.

dead." To these sentences which support his thesis he knows that there is opposed the doctrine of ubiquity, which is supported by Matthew xxviii. 20, "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." And what of the charge of *Nestorianism*?

Zwingli, while maintaining strongly the unity of the Person of Christ, certainly separates the functioning of the two natures. "According to His *divine* nature, Christ has never left the right hand of the Father.

"According to this nature, He is everywhere, and has no need to ascend into heaven. He has assumed the *human* nature, being conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. He has grown in wisdom and stature, He has suffered hunger and thirst, been nailed to the Cross, and with this nature He has gone to heaven." (ii. 448). This is the *locus classicus* for the so-called Zwinglian Nestorianism.

Ebrard¹ is at much pains to refute this charge, and strives to show the harmony of Zwingli's teaching with that of the Chalcedon Council.

(A) Zwingli teaches that Christ is one Person. "He who died was God."

(B) He ascribes to the divine nature eternal actions (*ewige Akte*), and to the human nature historical transactions (*historische Handlungen*).

(C) The acting subject (*handelnde Subject*), in both cases, is one and the same Christ, but

(D) The actions (*Akte*) belong to His divine nature, while the transactions (*Handlungen*) belong to the human nature.

When Zwingli speaks of two natures, Lutheran opponents have alleged that he understands two substances. When he says, "Christ has suffered according to His human nature," they explain this as if he maintained that the human nature was the one thing or portion that suffered, while the other thing or portion followed another pursuit (*einer anderen Beschäftigung nachzug*). When he says, "Jesus has, according to His divine nature, never left the bosom of the Father, but He has ascended to Heaven according to His human nature," they give to these words the meaning that the one part of Christ remained in heaven, while the other part, separated from it, was on earth for a time, and

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 226.

then returned to the other. But to Zwingli the two natures are not two substances. The divine nature is the *Gottliche Wesen* (divine essence), which is eternal, and the human nature is the *Seynsform* (Form of Being), into which the eternal, divine being was incarnated. Christ stands in an eternal relationship with the Father, and this bond was not broken by the Incarnation. This is His *divine* nature. Christ stands in a historical relation to the Creation, but this does not disturb His relations to God the Father. This is His *human* nature. Every action of Christ, according to Zwingli, relates to His whole Person. He is the *Subjectum Agens*. Zwingli does not say, "The divine nature remained in Heaven; the human nature journeyed to earth," as if they were two separately subsisting things. He does say, "The two natures are the two sides of the relationship in which Christ stood to the Creation and to the Father, God." He does not think of the human nature as being on earth and the divine nature separated from it and existing in heaven. He does not separate the "Theophoros Jesus" and the "Weltregierender Logos." He shows this clearly when he teaches that Christ has ever been with the Father, and proves it from Holy Scripture.¹

In the *fourth proof of Article II* he replies to another objection to his theory, that it does detriment to the almighty power of God, and in the *fifth proof of the same Article* he answers the further argument that "Christ can be where He will."

In *Article III*. Zwingli repeats the exegetical argument of his thesis, basing again his interpretation on Exodus xii. 11.

In *Article IV*. he deals with the question already raised whether *Eulogein* can have the sense of *Consecriren*.

As regards the general teaching of the *Klare Unterrichtung*, we can say:

(A) It again substitutes the commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ for the repetition of the sacrifice.

(B) It rejects consubstantiation and transubstantiation.

(C) It sees in the Supper a pledge that Christ has died for us.

(D) How far the faith of the individual partaker is strengthened by the Supper—this question is not raised.

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 226 f.

This document is principally interesting for its bearing on the charge of *Nestorianism*, and as an answer to the *Vorrede* of Luther, where he included Zwingli among the Fanatics.

In this *Vorrede*, Luther had indicated *two arguments* advanced by the Sacramentarians against the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper, as an object of faith. He now issued a new writing where he dealt particularly with these objections.

The *Sermon vom Sakrament des Blutes Christi* appeared in March, 1526.¹ This was the first independent publication of Luther against the Swiss doctrine, as this doctrine had been refuted by the *Syngramma*, and it is clearly based, not on a reading of the works of his adversaries, but on opinions of them which he had heard expressed by Pirkheimer, Brenz, and Bugenhagen. He divides the discussion of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper into *two* sections.

Section I. deals with the *object (objectum) of faith*—the presence of the body and blood of Christ.

Section II. deals with *faith itself*, or in general, the proper use of the Sacrament.

In *Section I.* he alleges that the opponents of the bodily presence have only two arguments.

(A) It seems to reason an *unbecoming* thing that Christ's body should be in the bread.

(B) It is *unnecessary* that Christ's body and blood should be in the bread and wine.

(A) As regards the *first* objection, it is claimed by the opponents that the presence of the body of Christ in the bread is a miracle, contradictory to the evidences of the senses. It is certainly a miracle that the body of Christ should be ubiquitous, present at a hundred thousand places. But Luther finds equally great miracles, not only in the Incarnation, but even in ordinary creature life.

There is, for instance, the one weak human voice, which is caught, whole and undivided, by each one of a thousand ears upon which it falls. If one spoken word can thus distribute itself, how much more can Christ do the same with His glorified body? This is a close approximation to the "dynamic" theory of Calvin. From this comparison

¹ Erl. edit. vol. 29, p. 293 ff. Hauck-Herzog, xx. p. 184.

Luther proceeds to observe further, that the one Christ Himself, with His bodily voice, *i.e.*, the preaching of the Gospel, is brought into many hearts (cf. the *Syngramma*). Here we must say we have the true Christ. The heart feels His presence through the experience of faith, without our knowing how it is effected. He sits at once at the right hand of the Father, and is also present in the believing heart. "Should it then be astonishing," he asks, "that Christ should bring Himself into the bread and into the wine?" Here we have a defence of the sacramental presence of the glorified body which was developed more fully in later writings. We might say that the presence is an immediate inference from the *ubiquity* of Christ, and yet the presence is still made to be dependent upon the Word. It is the Word that binds the body and blood with the bread and wine. The *touto* includes both bread and body. This means further that the body and blood enter with the bread and wine into the bodies of all, even the *unworthy* communicants.

Luther makes short work of the *second* argument of his opponents,¹ that the *presence in the Supper is not necessary*, declaring bluntly that they therein attempt to vanquish God and Christ. If God says it is necessary, all creatures must keep silent. He challenges them to explain why it is necessary for God Who has sin, death, and the devil in His power to send His Son to die for our deliverance, or why God feeds us with bread, when He could do so with His bare Word.

The *Second Section* of the work is concerned with the *Use and Reception* of the Sacrament. He here opposes, as before, the old error which makes a meritorious work out of the Sacrament, as also the new error according to which it is a bare badge by which Christians may be recognised, and he insists upon the words, "My body, which is given for you." He locates the right use of the Sacrament in the faith—not only that Christ is present with body and blood, but that He is here bestowed upon us for the forgiveness of sins. Thus the Sacrament for Luther takes its place by the side of the general preaching of forgiveness, secured by the death of Christ. "Christ has accomplished it (forgive-

¹ Erl. edit. 29, p. 293 ff.

ness) once upon the Cross, and He allows it to be distributed daily to us anew through preaching." But it is the peculiarity of the sacramental distribution, that, although the same thing is found in preaching as in the Sacrament, yet there is in the latter case this advantage, that it is there directed to *individual* souls. In public preaching, it is given to no one in particular. Whosoever will may take it, but in the Sacrament it is offered to each individual person. The peculiarity of the Sacrament is the definite, individual application of the forgiveness distributed through the Word. In Luther's own expressive language, "The Sacrament is the putting in action of the promise of the Saviour, 'Thy sins are pardoned.' " The Sacrament *individualises*. It is "for me, for me, for me." ¹

Zwingli did not hurry to reply to Luther. He allowed three months to pass, and in that time he engaged in correspondence with Johannes Haner. This correspondence is very interesting for *two* reasons.

(a) Haner seems to have held opinions similar to Calvin.

(b) In a letter of 3rd December, 1526, Zwingli first brings forth a point of doctrine, which afterwards assumed great importance in his teaching. We refer to the *alloeosis* or *Gegenwechsel*, i.e., "the rhetorical exchange by which, when speaking of the one nature of Christ, we use the terms belonging to the other." ²

Haner appears to have been chiefly exercised with the question of the bodily and spiritual eating. He enquires what exactly is the relation of faith to the flesh of Christ. Zwingli replies that "what is said about faith in Christ and His death relates not to the *human* nature of Christ. Yea, the death itself, which is the sacrifice for our sins, would not be so precious if He, Who, according to the one nature was mortal, were not according to the other, Life. When we say, then, that we trust in the flesh of Christ, we mean by His flesh, His death, and, on the other hand, to say that we trust in His death, is by *alloeosis*, nothing else than to say, that we trust in God Who died, according to His other nature. Whatever may be our way of expressing it, the subject of our faith is always and only God. But because He, Who is the Son of God, is also the Son of man, one

¹ Erl. edit. 29, p. 305.

² Ebrard. *op. cit.* ii. p. 247.

hypostasis, but two natures, it follows that there is ascribed to the humanity or to the flesh, what belongs to the divine nature alone." That is the *alloeosis* or *commutatio idiomatum*.¹ It is to be carefully distinguished from Luther's *communicatio idiomatum*, of which we shall hear later. Zwingli will have nothing to do with the mixing of the natures, where one nature assumes the attributes of the other. His *alloeosis* is a *commutatio* of terms, and professes to be founded on a real unity of the Person of Christ, Whose humanity is the direct, complete revelation of His divinity. The *alloeosis* appears in most of his later works. We shall find that Luther objected to the *alloeosis* in that "this separation of the works of the two natures no longer permits us to see in the human nature the full revelation of God." To Luther, the *alloeosis* was the "devil's mask."² In the early part of 1527 Zwingli forwarded two new writings to Luther. These were the *Amica Exegesis* and the *Freundlich Verglimpfung*. As their titles denote, they were couched in moderate terms, and ought to have made a favourable impression on him. That they did not have this effect, is explained by the fact that when they were handed to Luther they were accompanied by a letter which was couched in quite another tone.³

Zwingli had been falsely informed in a communication from Haner (28th February, 1527) that Luther was preparing a great work against him and Oekolampadius, in which he would announce a complete change of standpoint; that he would surrender the absurdity of the presence of the flesh in the Supper, and would now substitute for it a "Mystery of the divine operation in us." In the letter which Zwingli now wrote, he assumed that this rumour was true, and in unmeasured language he condemned the amended teaching. "With the new teaching that in the Supper there is no fleshly eating, but that the flesh, in a secret way (in *mysterio*), enlivens and strengthens through the power of the Holy Spirit, you will not compose our differences."⁴ This view, which Haner attributed to Luther, is a partial anticipation of the later theory of Calvin. But, as we have already remarked, there were no grounds

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 247.

² Erl. edit. xxx. p. 203.

³ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 257.

⁴ Baur, *op. cit.* ii. p. 508.

for the assertion that Luther had assumed this view, and when he received the letter of Zwingli which contained this assumption, the favourable impression which the *Amica Exegesis* and the *Freundlich Verglimpfung* might have created, was annulled. Luther wrote to Spalatin (May 4th, 1527), "Zwingli has sent to me a letter full of pride, calumny, obstinacy, and hate, yet couched in outwardly pleasant words."¹ Already, however, he had prepared a work against the *Schwarmgeister*, which was written before he had time to examine Zwingli's packet. This work, *Dass diese Worte . . . wider die Schwarmgeister* (1st May, 1527), increased the bitterness of the controversy, for Zwingli replied on 20th June in his *Dass diese Worte . . . ewig den alten Sinn haben werden*. Luther retaliated in his *Grosses Bekenntnis*, which was answered both by Zwingli and by Oekolampadius.

In this group of controversial works the main question was that of the bodily presence in the Supper and the possibility of the presence of the body in many places. This problem of *ubiquity* involved a consideration of Christological theories. In the course of the controversy the same arguments occur—*replik und duplik*,² and we now propose to treat these writings as a whole in their bearing on the subject of discussion.

From the beginning, as we have seen, Luther taught the presence of the body of Christ in the Supper in such a way that the body as a seal of forgiveness strengthens the communicant in his faith.

The theories of Karlstadt, Zwingli, and Oekolampadius were all anathema to him, because they seemed to deny this bodily presence (W. 22, p. 261). The words of Institution appeared to him simple and clear. What need for interpretation of such plain terms as bread, wine, body, blood, eat, drink? (W. 19, p. 493). The words themselves point to realities. This is confirmed by the consideration that the traditional preservation of them is in all the sources in the same simple form, and that symbols are characteristic of the Old Testament, not of the New. Accordingly, he inferred that we truly eat the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper (W. 19, p. 478). But *how* this occurs, or how He is

¹ Köhler, *op. cit.* p. 494.

² Hauck-Herzog, vol. 20, p. 184 f.

in the bread, we do not know. We should believe the Word of God, and not dictate ways and means to Him (W. 23, p. 87). The exegetical difficulties of the words of Institution never troubled Luther, and he denied the application of John, chap. 6, to the Lord's Supper. Nor did the manner of the union of the body and the bread disturb him.

We have come to the point, however, when another problem awakened his profound concern. His opponents asserted the impossibility of the bodily presence *in many places*. If Luther meant to maintain his position, it was incumbent upon him to prove that the *ubiquity of the body* was conceivable. This led to three results, as Loofs has pointed out.¹

1st. It compelled Luther to provide a speculative basis for his teaching.

2nd. It revealed a difference in the Christological views of Zwingli and Luther.²

3rd. It developed the Reformed ideas of Luther in a marked manner.

On the other hand, we have to remember two things, as Seeberg indicates.³

In the *First place*, for Luther, as a Scholastically trained theologian, the problem was not an uncongenial one. He always regarded himself as superior to Zwingli, who had been bred in the Erasmic-Humanist school.

In the *Second place*, Luther's Christology furnished the materials to be used in the solution of the problem. Luther had always thought of the two natures of Christ as so united that the Man Jesus was in all His words and works, the expression and the organ of His divine nature. He knew no God except the One revealed in the Man Jesus. God is present and substantial in all things, but He dwells in Christ bodily, so that One Person is God and Man (W. 23, p. 141). The flesh of Christ is therefore a divine-flesh, a spirit-flesh (*Gottesfleisch, Geistesfleisch*). It is in God, and God in it. God has become completely man, so that

¹ Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 807. W.—Quotations from the Weimar edition of Luther's works.

² Bruce, *Humiliation of Christ*, p. 82. Dorner, *Person of Christ*, ii. p. 53. Thomasius, *Christi Person und Werk*, iii. p. 13.

³ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 381, *passim*.

all human attributes, such as suffering and dying have also become His (W. 23, p. 243). The *communicatio idiomatum* is thus taken in its full meaning, and this denotes an advance on the traditional theology.¹ "It marks a step forward in the development of the Christian religion," says Herrmann. "It includes an inference not previously drawn. The practical identity of the human and the divine natures in the earthly life of Jesus is deliberately transferred to the state of exaltation."² "If the words and deeds of Jesus on earth were the words and deeds of God, then are the works of the Lord in heaven also the works of the Man Jesus. And this means that the Man Jesus is at the same time the omnipresent and omnipotent Lord of the world. If He is present at the Lord's Supper, He is there also as the Man Jesus, and since He rose from the dead bodily, therefore His body is also present in the Sacrament." (W. 50, p. 587). Thus the theory of ubiquity is, in Luther's understanding of it, only a logical inference from his Christology.

The Christological proof is his *first* line of argument for the ubiquity, and so for the presence of the body. "I found on this Article of our faith. . . . Jesus Christ is essentially, naturally, really, fully God and Man in one Person, inseparable and undivided (W. 26, p. 332)." We can understand, then, his attitude to Zwingli's teaching on the *alloeosis*.³ As Luther describes it, "The Scriptures are supposed simply to take the one nature for the other, whilst each of the natures in reality yet remains so distinct from the other as to retain only its own characteristic modes of action and activity" (W. 26, 321). Against this Luther cannot too constantly warn. He declares that the *alloeosis* is an entirely arbitrary invention of Zwingli, without any evidence from Scripture. Its grandmother is the old Sorceress, Dame Reason. He turns against it the force of the fundamental interest of the Christian faith. "When the Scriptures speak of the sufferings of Christ, this is, according to Zwingli, to be understood only of His human nature. But in this case, Christ would accomplish nothing more by His sufferings than any other saint. If only the

¹ See note 3, p. 76.

² Herrmann, *Communion of the Christian with God*, p. 148.

³ H. R. Mackintosh, *The Person of Christ*, p. 233.

human nature suffered for us, then is Christ a poor Saviour, and stands in need of a Saviour for Himself. If the Person of Christ is divided, as this 'accursed *alloeosis*' teaches, the whole Christian faith and the salvation of the world are at once swept away" (W. 26, 321 f.).

That is Luther's criticism of the *alloeosis*. It is a pertinent criticism if we accept his understanding of it. But, as we have seen in our examination of the Haner Letter, Zwingli was just as decided as Luther in his maintenance of the unity of the Person, and even Seeberg, the Lutheran theologian, admits that Zwingli's ideas as to the divine and human natures are orthodox. He only finds lacking the great Lutheran thought, that even the words and works of Christ are a revelation of God.¹

Luther's *second* line of proof for the ubiquity of the body of Christ, and so for its presence in the Supper, is, *that the right hand of God is everywhere*.² Zwingli had repeatedly asserted that Christ is at the right hand of God. Luther ridicules Zwingli's idea of the right hand of God. This cannot be conceived as a "golden chair beside the Father" (W. 23, p. 131 f.). The Scriptures do not bind the right hand of God to any place. His right hand is "His almighty power which cannot be anywhere, is enclosed in no single place, yet, at the same time, is essentially present in all places, even upon the smallest leaf of the tree, in the most inward and the most outward thing, around and about, through and through, beneath and above, before and behind. If God is thus substantial and present in all places, then His right hand is also everywhere in all things" (W. 23, p. 143). Accordingly, Christ is also omnipresent, and that, too, in His body, *i.e.*, He reigns and has power over all things. If He is to have power and reign, He must certainly also be there present and substantial (W. 23, p. 145). This ubiquity must, of course, be applicable in a general sense, even apart from the Lord's Supper. The body of Christ is in every stone, in fire and water, but we can really find Him only where He has in His Word directed us to seek Him. "But He is then present for thee when He adds His Word, and thereby binds Himself to thee, and

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 379.

² Hauck-Herzog, vol. 20, p. 187. Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 380.

says, 'Here shalt thou find Me.' Thou shalt not seize upon Him, although He is in thy bread, unless He bind Himself to thee and assign thee a particular table, by a word, and point out to thee the very bread by His Word" (W. 23, p. 151). As is the divine nature, so also is Christ in His body near to all, and it is only a question of His revealing Himself. But this revelation takes place in the words of Institution, which instruct us to seek and find in a particular loaf Him Who is essentially present in every loaf.

The presence of the glorified body is to be conceived of in the same manner as the divine presence in the world in general. "God is not such an outspread, long, broad, thick, deep being, filling the world as straw fills a sack" (W. 26, p. 339). We are not, therefore, to think of any sensible local presence.

There are Three modes of being present in one place, according to Luther.¹

(A) Locally or Circumscriptively.

(B) Definitively.

(C) Repletively.

This classification is of Scholastic origin. The first two modes are derived from Occam. The threefold classification (adding the repletive mode) was taken from Biel.

(A) A thing is locally (W. 26, p. 385) or in a comprehensible manner in a place when the place and the thing present in it correspond with and measure one another, as, for example, the wine and the vessel which it fills. In this way the body of Christ was present when He, walking upon the earth, filled or vacated space equal to the size of His body.

(B) A thing is definitively or incomprehensibly present in a place when it does not correspond with the portion of space in the latter, as an angel may be in a whole house, in one room, or even in a nut-shell. In this way can Christ's body be present, when it neither gives nor takes any space, but goes where it wills. Such was the manner in which Christ's body passed through the sealed stone or the closed door. And thus He passes, says Luther, upon all occasions,

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 387. Hauck-Herzog, xx. p. 180 f.

through all created things at His will. In such a way are we to conceive of the presence of Christ's body in the Lord's Supper (W. 26, p. 335). We are, therefore, to represent to ourselves the presence of Christ in the sense in which the soul permeates the body, and not in the "crude, fat and thick ideas of the circumscriptive mode of existence. The word 'in' is not to be understood in the sense in which straw is in a sack and bread in a basket" (W. 23, p. 185). Not in this external, local way is Christ in the Supper, but in some such way as colour and light are in the eye. A sacramental unity (*Einigkeit*) exists between the body and the bread. But the body which is here spoken of is the veritable body of Christ which was born of the Virgin (W. 26, p. 341).¹

(C) A thing is repletively or supernaturally present when it is at the same time in its entirety at all places and fills all places, and is yet measured and contained by no place. According to the third mode of presence, all created things are for Christ far more penetrable and more truly present than according to the second. This repletive mode of presence is also attributable to the body of Christ (W. 26, p. 329).

These are *three* suggestions of Luther as to the mode of the Saviour's presence in the Supper, but he expressly states that he has no thought of having thus exhausted the possible modes of divine presence. He does not seek to establish upon such grounds the actual fact of the sacramental presence. He only claims to have thus indicated, for the sake of those to whom the latter appeared irreconcilable with the continued existence in heaven, a way in which the two conceptions can be very easily combined. The real basis of faith in the doctrine remains the Word of God, "This is My body." What Luther was really contending for in all these speculations was the religious interest that Christ is present in the Supper as the Man-Jesus, with the human nature (including His body) by which He effects our salvation. He was contending for the idea that in the Lord's Supper there is the bestowal of a gift. Here lay the nerve of his opposition to Zwingli and Oeko lampadius.¹

¹ Hauck-Herzog, xx. p. 189. Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 388 f.

"The Sacrament is not a sign of a future or absent thing, but a form of the thing present and yet invisible. It is not a mere act of remembrance or obligation (*Errinerung und Verpflichtung*). Under the visible form of bread and wine are His invisible body and blood present" (W. 23, p. 211).¹ The important thing for which he contends is, that Christ, the historical Redeemer, is present, and that we are not merely to think of Him as present by an effort of the imagination or by the contemplation of faith.

The Scholastic apparatus with which he seeks to establish this position he regards as a means to an end. The *communicatio idiomatum*, the different modes of presence, he suggests, are to be regarded in the light of speculations. These speculations may have led to exaggerations. As Luther accused Zwingli of Nestorianism, so Zwingli accused Luther of creating an *alterum infinitivum*, and of *docetism*.² Perhaps all such accusations were based on misunderstandings which were occasioned by personal prejudices. It was when they came face to face at Marburg that they found many points of contact.

Meanwhile, before we proceed to the discussion of that Colloquy, there are some points of Luther's doctrine which must still be noted, in order that our estimate of his teaching on the Lord's Supper may be complete.

As regards the *reception and fruit of the Sacrament*, he teaches that we do really chew and eat the body of Christ, and that the Pope was, therefore, justified in requiring the confession of Berengar that bread and wine are not only a Sacrament, but also the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and are, in truth, broken and torn by the teeth of the faithful. But the bread is the body, as the dove is the Holy Ghost, for "no one sees, grasps, eats or chews the body of Christ, as we visibly see and chew other flesh. For whatever we do to the bread is well and properly applied to the body and blood of Christ, on account of the sacramental unity" (W. 26, p. 442 f.). The bread is therefore really eaten, but with it at the same time the spiritual body of Christ. Bread and body remain what they are, but are at the same time and together present (W. 26, p. 445).

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 389.

² Dorner, *op. cit.* i. p. 322 ff.

There results a substantial unity of the body of Christ with us, and not alone a spiritual, subsisting in the mind and will (W. 23, p. 239). But despite this *manducatio oralis*, our reception of this gift must be spiritual, *i.e.*, the heart must believe the presence in the bread which the Word proclaims (W. 23, p. 186 f.). But unbelievers also receive the body, although to their own hurt. Fanatics, however, like Zwingli, who do not believe the words of Institution, receive nothing but bread and wine (W. 23, pp. 179 and 255). Only faith apprehends life and salvation in the present body of the Lord (W. 23, p. 251). This is the spiritual eating which must accompany the bodily eating (W. 23, p. 179, and 26, p. 296). Thus the body of Christ is present in the Lord's Supper, but only the believer understands and grasps this, and has in consequence the blessing which the body brings. "That which is given therein and therewith, the body cannot grasp or take to itself, but this is done by the faith of the heart which discerns the treasure and desires it" (W. 30, p. 226). From this we understand Luther's view of the *Benefit of the Sacrament*. The body of Christ, whose presence in the bread faith apprehends, strengthens faith (W. 23, p. 259) . . . and gives it the assurance of the forgiveness of sins (W. 23, p. 261) . . . and enlivens the strength for the moral struggle (W. 30, p. 225).

The presence of the body and blood of Christ brings us the salvation which He has secured by means of the body and blood. The whole new testament is here, and brings us the forgiveness of sins, the Spirit, grace, life, and all blessedness (W. 26, p. 478). Thus the Word, combined with the Redeemer offered by it, and bodily present in the Sacrament, effects a strengthening of faith, the sense of forgiveness, life and salvation. It is at this point that Luther presents the beautiful and wonderful connection existing between all parts of the Sacrament. "The words are the first thing, for without the words the cup and bread would be nothing. Further, without the bread and cup, there would be no body and blood of Christ. Without the body and blood of Christ, there would be no new testament. Without the new testament, there would be no forgiveness of sins. Without the forgiveness of sins, there would be no life and salvation. Thus the words in the first place em-

brace the bread and cup (to constitute the Sacrament). The bread and cup embrace the body and blood of Christ. The body and blood of Christ embrace the new testament. The new testament embraces the forgiveness of sins. The forgiveness of sins embraces life and salvation. Behold, all this do the words of the Lord's Supper offer and give to us, and we grasp it by faith " (W. 26, p. 478 ff.).¹

This is the *spiritual* effect produced in us by the Lord's Supper, and to this there is further added, in harmony with the ancient Church, an effect upon the *body* of the recipient. The body of Christ is a pledge which gives to our body the assurance that it shall, by virtue of the eternal food thus received by us, also live for ever (W. 23, p. 155 f.). This spiritual food transforms this "poor moth sack," so that it also becomes spiritual, that is, "eternally alive and blessed" (W. 23, p. 203). But this *second* train of thought, which would have been a powerful argument against Zwingli, had but a minor importance for Luther. He employed it in the *Dass die Worte*, but he omitted it in the *Grosses Katechism*, where the whole benefit of the Sacrament is made to consist in the strengthening of faith, or in the consciousness of the forgiveness of sins. The Sacrament is nothing but a "wholesome and comforting medicine, which may help thee and give thee life in both body and soul. For where the soul is refreshed and restored, there help is also given to the body" (W. 30, p. 230 f.). The Word present proclaims forgiveness. The Christ present confirms and strengthens and seals it, as it is He Himself who secured it for us. "Therefore we go to the Sacrament, in order that we may there secure a treasure, through which, and in which, we obtain forgiveness of sins. Wherefore this? Because the words are here, and give these things to us. If, therefore, I am commanded by Christ to eat and drink, in order that He may be mine, and may confer a benefit upon me, it is, as it were, a certain pledge and security, or rather the very thing itself which he has presented and pledged for my sins and death and all evils" (W. 23, p. 225).

Who, then, are the *worthy* and the *unworthy*? Faith together with the sense of unworthiness makes worthy

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 390.

(W. 30, p. 227). Therefore, we call them also unworthy who do not feel their faults nor are willing to be regarded as sinners, who are insolent and wild (W. 30, p. 229 f.). Under no conditions dare we think of the Sacrament as though it were a poison in which we should eat death (W. 30, p. 231).

When we view the Scholastic additions with which Luther "completed his theory" as speculations and suggestions, we agree with Seeberg that the "divergence of his later from his earlier view of the Supper must not be overestimated. The bodily presence of the Saviour in the bread and wine for the sealing of the words of Institution, for the strengthening of faith, and for the assurance of the forgiveness of sins, was beyond doubt his leading thought. What he added to this was certain ideas as to the mode of presence of the heavenly body, to which he was led by the course of controversy on the subject. These were in the first instance only auxiliary ideas, but they gradually assumed the character of permanent elements in the dogma, especially on the part of the epigones."¹ We have now stated the leading points in Luther's conception of the Supper, and we indicate in a few propositions what exactly his view involves.

1. The words of Institution are to be taken literally, not symbolically.
2. By virtue of synecdoche the word *touto* includes both the body and the bread.
3. While Christ is one Person, the *communicatio idiomatum* can be applied in the fullest sense to the divine and human natures of Christ.
4. The ubiquity of Christ's body makes possible the corporal presence of Christ in the Supper.
5. The corporal presence of Christ in the Supper strengthens faith.
6. The corporal presence of Christ in the Supper brings forgiveness of sins.

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 301.

IN OPPOSITION TO LUTHER, ZWINGLI EXPRESSLY
DENIED

1. That the words of Institution are to be taken literally.
2. That forgiveness of sins comes through Christ's body being corporally eaten.
3. That faith can be strengthened through Christ's body being corporally eaten.
4. That the body of Christ corporally eaten preserves our body for the resurrection.
5. That the *communicatio idiomatum* can be applied to the matter of the Supper.
6. That Christ's body, like His divine nature, is ubiquitous, as His body is at the right hand of God.
7. That his own doctrine of the *alloeosis* does detriment to the Person of Christ.

These Negative statements voice an opinion which was not merely private to Zwingli, but which was affirmed at an official Disputation at Bern on 6th January, 1528.¹

This Disputation was attended by Zwingli and other Swiss preachers, and was a complete triumph for their teaching.

Hereafter Bern, Zurich, and Basel—the three most enlightened and influential German cantons—were linked together in one common cause.

The Ten Theses or Conclusions, revised by Zwingli, were adopted as a Confession of Faith for the Church of Bern.

Only two of these Theses concern us here.²

In Thesis V. *the Mass is condemned*. "The Mass, as now in use, in which Christ is offered to God, the Father, for the sins of the living and the dead, is contrary to Scripture, a blasphemy against the Most Holy Sacrifice, Passion, and Death of Christ, and on account of its abuses, an abomination to God."

In Thesis IV. *the corporal presence is entirely abandoned*, and Zwingli's doctrine is completely vindicated. "The

¹ Hundeshagen, *Die Konflikte des Zwinglianismus, Lutherthums, und Calvinismus in den Bernischen Kirchen*, p. 22.

² Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, p. 365. }

essential and corporal presence of the body of Christ and His blood cannot be demonstrated from Holy Scripture."

The results of the Disputation of Bern were full of significance for Germany. Zwingli's view of the Lord's Supper was proclaimed as that of not merely a few isolated theologians and scattered cantons, but as that of the larger and more influential part of Switzerland.

Four South German cities had dared to side with him openly in his rejection of the corporal presence.

CHAPTER VII

C. ZWINGLI'S THIRD PERIOD . . . MARBURG (1529) . . . TILL HIS DEATH IN 1531.¹

Preparations for the Marburg Conference—Discussion at Marburg—Results of Marburg—Influence of Marburg on the Augsburg Confession—Augsburg Confession . . . Article Ten—The Tetrapolitan Confession . . . Germ of Calvinism—Zwingli's *Fidei Ratio* . . . July 1530—Zwingli's *Auslegung des Christlichen Glaubens* . . . 1531—Final Summing up of Zwingli's Doctrine—Zwingli's Death at Kappel in 1531.

WE have now come to the *third* period of Zwingli's brief career as a Reformer, and we have once more evidence of *positive* elements in his teaching. We meet here the same ideas as we encountered in the *Letter to Wyttenbach*, only they are considerably developed, so that, as Miéville says,² "We can regard the writings of all this *third* period as a commentary on this Letter. If we can characterise Zwingli's *first* period (1522-1524) as *Zwingli and the Mass*, and the *second* period as *Zwingli and Luther*, we can regard this *final* phase (1528-1531) as *Zwingli and Bucer*. We can trace the mediating hand of Bucer in most of the transactions of this time. Bucer was present at the Marburg Conference, and for many years after he strove to effect a doctrinal understanding between Saxony and Switzerland.

The Diet of Speier (April, 1529) had given new strength to the Roman party, and in this critical situation the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave Philip of Hesse formed a secret agreement with the cities of Strasbourg and St. Gall for their mutual protection. These cities sided with

¹ Schmitt, *Das Religionsgespräch zu Marburg*. Erichson, *Das Marburger Religionsgespräch*.

² Miéville, *op. cit.* p. 88.

Zwingli on the Eucharistic question, and thus made it very desirable that the parties to this new compact should come to an understanding on this debated point of doctrine. After consulting Melanchthon personally at Speier and Zwingli by letter, the Landgrave issued formal invitations to the Reformers to meet in Marburg. Zwingli received the invitation with joy. He and Philip of Hesse had political and theological sympathies. Zwingli, who was a statesman as well as a reformer, conceived about that time far-reaching combinations in the interests of the Reformation.¹ "The hands Zwingli and Philip held out to Luther were not pure hands," says Harnack, "but the Wittenbergers (Luther and Melanchthon) realised this fact, and would have nothing to do with alliances, unless against a foreign foe."²

Luther had a still stronger motive to discourage a Colloquy. He had described the Swiss divines as dangerous heretics, and was unwilling to negotiate with them except on terms of absolute surrender. The Wittenbergers, therefore, received the invitation to a Conference with distrust. But the Elector was unwilling to displease the Landgrave of Hesse, and commanded the Reformers to attend.³

The famous Conference was held on the first three days of October, 1529, and it was of great importance for the elucidation of doctrine.

"The Meeting was something supreme and world significant," says Ranke.⁴ The Landgrave first arranged a private interview between the lions and the lambs, *i.e.*, between Luther and Oekolampadius; Zwingli and Melanchthon. The two pairs met after divine service in separate chambers, and conferred for several hours. Luther and Melanchthon had certain prejudices regarding the Swiss, and Zwingli's solemn declaration that he adhered to the Nicene and Athanasian symbols occasioned great surprise. In a few hours Luther and Melanchthon were convinced that they had not to do with Fanatics, and this created a better atmosphere for the discussion of the doctrine of the Supper.

¹ Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, vii. p. 260.

² *Ibid.*

³ Rothe, *Kirchengeschichte*, ii. p. 334 f.

⁴ Ranke, vol. iii. p. 122 f. Hospinian, *Hist. Sac.*, ii. p. 74 ff. Collin, *Die Notate. des Ohrenzeugen*. Schaff, *German Reformation*, ii. p. 629.

Immediately Zwingli and Melanchthon engaged in a private conversation on this matter. The reports of the discussion are defective, but enough is known to prove that on one point—the spiritual manducation which is given with faith—they were at one. This is important, for here we find Zwingli reverting to his original idea, that faith in Christ's death involves a living union with Him. We have seen that he practically denied this in the second period of his teaching. He returned now to his old basis. The further question might have been discussed as to whether the mystical union experiences a strengthening in the Supper, but this question was not raised.

The point of argument now was as to whether, along with that inner continuous manducation there is another of a different kind—an oral manducation. Melanchthon affirmed it. Zwingli denied it. Zwingli appealed to Augustine, but Melanchthon rejected the Patristic testimony. Zwingli appealed to John vi. 63, but Melanchthon, as Luther before him, said that the verse referred to the carnal understanding of Christ's words (*intellectus carnalis*), and that only the declaration of a coarse eating (*grobmundliches Essen*) is fleshly.¹

"He who teaches that Christ's body is eaten circumscriptively and visibly as animal flesh, he teaches in a fleshly way, as forbidden in John vi. 63. But Luther does not teach that, but rather maintains that Christ's body, though eaten with the mouth, is yet eaten in a certain mysterious manner."

Zwingli then answered, "But where does Scripture teach such an oral and yet not fleshly eating? This whole idea is put forth artificially, and is in nowise sanctioned by Christ and the Apostles."

Melanchthon had to grant that this Scholastic definition is derived from the words of Institution, where Christ gives His body to be eaten orally, and elsewhere denies a fleshly partaking.

Zwingli now indicated to Melanchthon that he was involved in a *petitio principii*, since he rested his interpretation of the words of Institution on the idea of the oral, as

¹ Baur, *op. cit.* ii. p. 612-643. Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 287. Schaff, *Germ. Ref.* ii. p. 637.

distinguished from the fleshly participation, and rested this again on the words of Institution. Melanchthon now fell back on the canon, that one ought not, without cause, to depart from the literal interpretation of Scripture.

Zwingli, however, had shown him that there is such a necessity in John vi., in that there the oral partaking is excluded, but no distinction made between a coarse and a fine oral manducation.¹

The discussion then turned on the *ubiquity* of the body of Christ.² Melanchthon asserted this, quoting Ephesians iv. 10 (Christ has ascended far above all heavens, in order to fill all things), affirming that one must not think of Christ's body as being in one place.

To that Zwingli replied, "Truly Christ fills all things with His power and might, but not with His body."

"According to several Pauline texts, Christ's body is like our body—a real, true body which cannot be in different places at the same time."

All sources are silent as to the remainder of this discussion, but already some progress had been made.

On Saturday, October 2nd, the Colloquy was resumed. Luther and Melanchthon, Zwingli and Oekolampadius sat at one table near the Landgrave Philip. In great capital letters Luther wrote the words of Institution on the table—*HOC EST CORPUS MEUM*.

He began the conversation by affirming that he would abide by this declaration. He demanded that the Fathers should not be appealed to, and that regard should only be taken of the Word of God. The debate was chiefly exegetical, and brought out no new argument. It was simply a recapitulation of the preceding controversy, with less heat and more gentlemanly courtesy. Luther took his stand on the literal sense of the words of the Institution. The Swiss appealed to the words of Christ, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth. The flesh profiteth nothing. The words I have spoken unto you, are spirit and life."

Luther called upon the Swiss to prove the absence of Christ, but protested at the outset against arguments

¹ Schaff, *Germ. Ref.* ii. p. 640 f.

² Baur, *op. cit.* ii. pp. 612-643. Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 287. Schaff, *Germ. Ref.* ii. p. 629 ff.

drawn from geometry and reason. Oekolampadius in reply said he would abstain from philosophical arguments and appeal to the Scriptures. He quoted several passages which have an obviously figurative meaning, but especially John vi. 63, which in his judgment furnished the key for the interpretation of the words of Institution. He employed the syllogism, "Christ cannot contradict Himself; He said, 'The flesh profiteth nothing,' and thereby rejected the oral manducation of His body. Therefore He cannot mean such a manducation in the Lord's Supper." ¹

Luther denied the second proposition, and asserted that Christ did not reject oral, but only gross, material (*grob-mundlich*) manducation, like that of the flesh of oxen or of swine.

Oekolampadius next objected that the bodily presence is a matter of opinion, and not of faith. Faith relates to God.

Luther's view, on the other hand, led to a reliance on earthly elements.

The exegetical investigation was thus departed from, and a religious, philosophical discussion then took place. Luther now tried to elevate the question from the faith which is related to the bread and wine to that higher faith which relates to God. "One ought not to direct one's faith to the bread and wine, unless God commands it. To lift up a blade of straw from the ground is a spiritual transaction," he pleaded, "if God commanded it. Merely because God wills and says it, must we believe that Christ's body is in the bread, and is orally partaken of. If God says anything, we must believe it, even if He says that a horseshoe is His body."

Oekolampadius then mildly asked whether the oral manducation makes believers partakers of any blessing which they do not already possess in the spiritual manducation.

Luther replied that he acknowledged no such particular blessing, but angrily retorted, "I do not ask what is the profit of the bodily eating, but whether it is written. It is enough that God has said it. Men must therefore do it.

¹ Baur, *op. cit.* ii. pp. 624-642. Wernle, *op. cit.* pp. 287-294. Schaff, *Germ. Ref.* ii. p. 640 f.

If God should order me to eat dung, I would do it, being assured that it would be salutary. We must close the eyes. But the eating of which I speak is a sublime spiritual fruition, and yet with the mouth."

This concluded the conversation between Oekolampadius and Luther.

Zwingli now interposed.

He began with the statement, "The Sacrament is no *opus operatum*. God does not command us to eat dung or to do anything unreasonable, in order to be blessed (*selig*), but to eat and drink the body of the Crucified One, *i.e.*, the death of Christ Who gave Himself for us, in order that through His death, He might be our life and food. Jesus says that His flesh, bodily eaten, profits nothing. Why then should He command Christians to eat it bodily?"¹

To that Luther immediately replied, "The words stand there clear and plain. If God put crab apples before me, and commanded me to eat, I should not question why. Christ adds to the spiritual eating in the Supper, the bodily. That we shall do and believe. The mouth receives the body of Christ. The soul believes the Word of God."

Zwingli now quoted a number of figurative passages; but Luther always pointed his finger to the words of Institution, as he had written them on the table. He denied that the discourse in John vi. had anything to do with the Lord's Supper.

Zwingli insisted on the relevancy of this passage to the discussion, and, growing excited, he exclaimed, "That passage breaks your neck."

Luther took the jibe literally, and cried, "Do not boast too much. You are in Hesse, not in Switzerland. In this country, we do not break people's necks. Spare such proud words till you get back to your Swiss."

The Landgrave here interposed, and said, "You should not take offence at such common expressions." But the agitation was so great that the meeting had to be adjourned. The Colloquy was resumed in the afternoon, and turned on the Christological question.

"I believe," said Luther, "that Christ is in heaven, but also in the Sacrament, as substantially as He was in the

¹ Wernle, *op. cit.* pp. 287-294. Baur, *op. cit.*, ii. pp. 624-642. Schaff, *Germ. Ref.* ii. p. 640 f.

Virgin's womb. I care not whether it be against reason and nature, provided it be not against faith."

Oekolampadius maintained that Luther's view was contrary to faith, for the orthodox faith teaches that "Christ, according to His human nature is like us."

We have no record of Luther's reply to this statement, but afterwards he admitted that it was the best argument that his opponents had brought forward. "We know Christ not after the flesh," continued Oekolampadius. But to this Melanchthon responded that it was a question of the "corruptible flesh."¹

And now the exegetical argument was resumed. "You deny the metaphor in the words of Institution," said Oekolampadius, "but you must admit a synecdoche. For Christ does not say, 'This is bread and My body' (as you hold), but simply, 'This is My body.'"

"A metaphor admits the existence of a sign only," responded Luther, "but a synecdoche admits the thing itself, as when I say, 'The sword is in the scabbard,' or 'The beer is in the bottle.'"

No reason would convince him of his opponents' arguments in exegesis, but to every statement he had only one answer, "The text demands it."²

Zwingli now directed the discussion to the dogmatic question, and on that line the conversation continued until the end of the Colloquy. He based his argument on Rom. viii. 3, Phil. ii. 7, and Heb. ii. 17, that Jesus according to His Humanity is like us, and so has a true, human body. That requires

(A) That Jesus' body is a true body, formed and circumscribed.

(B) That it cannot be in several places at once.

To these arguments Luther angrily responded, "I grant that Christ's body is circumscribed. I care nothing about mathematics, but I will not grant your second proposition. I will not have it," he cried excitedly, "I will not have it."

To this Zwingli is said to have sarcastically replied, "And because you will not have it, it cannot be."²

¹ Wernle, *op. cit.* pp. 287-294. Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 286.

² Baur, *op. cit.* ii. pp. 624-642. Schaff, *Germ. Ref.* ii. p. 641 f.

The contest now grew incoherent, and was broken up by the call to a meal.

The next day, Sunday, October 3rd, it was renewed.

Zwingli began with Luther's admission as to the circumscription of the body, and maintained that a body could not be in different places at once. " "

" God can so effect it that a body, the body of any man, can be, or not be, in one place. In the Sacrament, Christ's body is not present in a spatial manner," said Luther. He quoted the Schoolmen to the effect that there are different kinds of presence. " The universe is a body, and yet not in a particular place."

Zwingli objected to the evidence of the Sophists, and again quoted from Augustine, who says, " Christ is everywhere present as God; but as to His body, He is in heaven."

He quoted also from Fulgentius, " Christ's human nature was not everywhere diffused."

But to that Luther replied that in these words there was no question of the Supper, and that Fulgentius, as also Augustine, describes the Supper as a sacrifice. " Yes," said Zwingli, " as the Commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ."

Luther had to acknowledge that the Swiss had Augustine and Fulgentius on their side, but he claimed the support of all the other Fathers, and maintained that we must believe the old teachers only so far as they agree with the Word of God.

" We, too, build on the Word of God, not on the Fathers," said Oekolampadius, " but we appeal to them to show that we teach no novelties."

Luther, pointing again his finger to the words on the table, responded, " This is our text. You have not yet driven us from it. We care for no other proof." ¹

" If that is so," said Oekolampadius, " we had better close the discussion."

The Chancellor exhorted them to come to an understanding, but Luther replied, " There is only one way. Let our adversaries believe as we do."

" We cannot," responded Zwingli.

¹ Schaff, *Germ. Ref.* ii. p. 641 f.

"Well, then, I abandon you to God's judgment, and pray that He will enlighten you," concluded Luther.

"We will do the same," answered Oekolampadius.
"You need it as much as we."

At this point both parties mellowed down. Luther asked pardon for his harsh words, and Zwingli assured Luther with tearful eyes that there were no men in the world whose friendship he more desired than that of the Wittenbergers. Sturm and Bucer spoke on behalf of Strasbourg, and vindicated their orthodoxy, which had been impeached.

Luther's reply was cold and biting. He declared to the Strasbourgers, as well as to the Swiss, "Your spirit is different from ours."

The Landgrave once more brought the guests together on Sunday evening, and urged upon every one the supreme importance of coming to an understanding. On the Monday morning he arranged another private conference between the Saxon and the Swiss Reformers. As a result of this Luther drew up a common Confession in the German language.

It is arranged in a series of 15 Articles. The two parties agreed on 14 Articles, and even on the more important part of the 15th Article, which reads as follows:—

"We all believe, with regard to the Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, that it ought to be celebrated in both kinds, according to the Institution of Christ; that the Mass is not a work by which a Christian obtains pardon for another man, whether dead or alive; that the Sacrament of the altar is the Sacrament of the very body and the very blood of Jesus Christ; and that the spiritual manducation of this body and blood is specially necessary to every true Christian.

"In like manner, as to the *Use* of the Sacrament, we are agreed that, like the Word, it was ordained of Almighty God, in order that weak consciences might be excited by the Holy Ghost to faith and charity. And although at present we are not agreed on the question whether the real body and blood of Christ are corporally present in the bread and wine, yet both parties shall cherish Christian charity for one another, so far as the conscience of each will permit.

"And both parties will earnestly implore Almighty God to strengthen us by His Spirit in the true understanding." ¹

Both sides claimed the victory. Zwingli thought that the truth, *i.e.*, his view of it, had prevailed, and that Luther was vanquished before all the world. Luther, on the other hand, thought the Swiss had come over to him half-way, that they had humbled themselves, and begged his friendship.

It has been a common fashion to decry the Conference and to designate it as fruitless. We hold, on the other hand, that it was by no means a total failure.

WHAT WERE THE GOOD RESULTS?

I. The contestants learned to know one another better, and Luther came to realise that the Swiss were not mere ignorant Fanatics, but men of deep religious convictions and sound intellectual grasp.

"The Marburg Conference," says Kolde, "served more to the true understanding of the differences than to the bridging of them." ²

The only point on which Zwingli differed from Luther was as to whether the true body and blood of Christ were present corporally in the bread and wine. As to this, we have not only the testimony of the Articles themselves, but that of the interesting letter of Luther to his wife, written the same day as the Articles were signed. "I do want you to know that our Colloquy at Marburg is at an end, and that we are agreed on almost every point, except that the opposite party wants to have only bread in the Lord's Supper, and acknowledges the spiritual presence of Christ in the same." ³

No one can charge Zwingli with truckling to Luther on this occasion, and if he accepted, as we have seen, a "non-Zwinglian" view of the Sacrament, it clearly shows that he did not regard such a view as either inconsistent with Scripture or inimical to the faith of the Church. Zwingli was obviously inclining again to his early and more positive testimony.

¹ Darwell Stone. *The Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, ii. p. 43.

² Hauck-Herzog, xii. p. 255. ³ Schaff, *Germ. Ref.* ii. p. 645.

II. There was a mutual undertaking to cease from controversial writings. This was of great importance for the succeeding years, and made possible the *Wittenberg Concordia* (1536), and the quiet development of the Calvin-Melanchthon type of doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

III. The Marburg Articles are also important as Ranke has discovered, for they are the same as the so-called *Schwabach Articles*, which, in their turn, formed the basis of the *Augsburg Confession* (1530).

IV. The Marburg Colloquy had an important influence on Melanchthon. In touch with the cultured soul of Oekolampadius, he received the first impulse to the rejection of some of the Scholastic elements of Luther's teaching. He continued in correspondence with Oekolampadius, and came finally to reject the literal interpretation of the words of Institution and the oral manducation. A certain influence is also evident in the wording of the *Tenth Article of the Augsburg Confession*.

It is outwith our scope to relate the historical circumstances that occasioned the Diet of Augsburg. It is sufficient to notice how it dealt with the question of the Lord's Supper.

In Article 10 we read as follows ¹:—

“Of the Supper of the Lord, they teach that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present (under the form of bread and wine), and are (there) communicated to those that eat in the Lord's Supper (and received). And they disapprove of those that teach otherwise (therefore also the opposite doctrine is rejected).”

This Article has both a Latin and a German form.

“*De coena Domini docent quod corpus et sanguis (wahrer Leib und Blut) Christi vere adsint (unter Gestalt des Brotes und Weines) et distribuantur vescentibus (da ausgetheilt und genommen wird) in coena Domini; et improbant secus docentes (derhalben wird auch die Gegenlehre verworfen).*”

The true opposition to Zwingli's teaching is here clearly set forth.

¹ Schaff's *Creeds of the Evangelical Protestant Churches*, p. 13. Curtis, *Creeds and Confessions*, p. 145. Tschackert, *Die unveränderte Augsbургische Confession* (Leipzig, 1901).

The body and blood of Christ are not merely present as an object of believing remembrance, but really (*wahrhaftig*) present. One believes not only on Christ's death, but one receives the glorified Christ.

The false opposition to Zwingli's teaching is passed over in silence.

In the Supper, Christ's body and blood are present in the act, in the whole of the sacramental transaction, not in the bread and wine. There is no question of an oral (*mundlich*) manducation.

The word *vescentibus* in the Latin cannot be regarded as in opposition to the succeeding Calvinistic teaching, that only believers receive Christ. It would in that case have read *omnibus vescentibus*.

This word is really in opposition to the Romish teaching, that the body of Christ is also present even after the moment of participation.

Still less do the words of the German *unter Gestalt des Weines und Brotes* contain the view of Luther as to the kind of presence. Had Luther said that "the body of Christ is present under the form of the bread," that would have been transubstantiation, according to which, "of the bread, only the form remains." These words were rather, as the special mention of the wine denotes, in opposition to the denying of the cup to the laity. The Sacrament is administered under both forms.

"Here we find," says Ebrard,¹ "that teaching on the Lord's Supper, as it had been developed through the mutual intercourse of Melanchthon and Oekolampadius. What Luther and Zwingli had not attained was brought to pass through the milder influence of their two lieutenants. Will one now say that the *Marburg Colloquy* was fruitless? The unity which was afterwards consummated between Melanchthon and Calvin found its origin in Marburg. The *Tenth Article of the Augsburg Confession* is a true but one-sided act of union. What Melanchthon had learned from Luther—the real act of the mystical union with Christ—he had positively expressed. What he had received from Oekolampadius, viz., that the words of the Institution speak above all of His broken body and the New Testament

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 357.

in His shed blood—this he only expressed negatively, in that he, at that time, rejected the local presence in the bread and the oral manducation. The unity was there. It only needed to be developed.”

The only blot on the fame of the Lutheran confessors of Augsburg was their intolerant attitude towards their fellow Protestants.

The four German cities (Strasbourg, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindau) which sympathised with the Zwinglian view of the Lord's Supper wished to sign the Confession of Augsburg, with the exception of the Tenth Article, which rejected their view; but they were excluded, and forced to hand in a separate Confession of Faith.

This *Tetrapolitan Confession* is the oldest Confession of the Reformed Church in Germany.¹ It was prepared in great haste during the session of the Diet of Augsburg by Bucer, with the help of Capito and Hedio. It was received very ungraciously by the Emperor, and never submitted to the Diet. It is in doctrine and arrangement closely conformed to the Lutheran Confession, and breathes the same spirit of moderation.

The *doctrine of the Lord's Supper* (Chapter 18) is couched in dubious language, which was intended to comprehend in substance the Lutheran and Zwinglian theories, and accords with the Union tendency of Bucer.

“In this ordinance,” it is said, “Christ offers His true body and blood as spiritual food and drink, whereby souls are nourished to everlasting life, so that now He may live and abide in them and they in Him.”

In this statement the relation of Christ's body to the bread as bread is kept in the background. Nothing is said of oral manducation and the participation of unbelievers, which are distinctive features of the Lutheran view. The caution is expressly given that the subscribers of this Confession do not wish to be represented as “administering nothing but mere bread at our Suppers.”

The four cities further declared that their preachers should diligently endeavour to turn the attention of the people away from the strife and the superfluous questions upon the

¹ Walch, *Luthers Werke*, xx. p. 1966.

subject to that which alone is profitable, and which Christ had in view.

"For so fed upon him, we live in Him and by Him, and are also one body and one bread among themselves," etc.

There still remains here the idea so contrary to Luther's position, *i.e.*, the description of the blessing of the Sacrament as "food for the soul." But the attempt to adopt as far as possible the Lutheran propositions as presented at Marburg is very evident, especially in the designation of the body as "the true body."

It is particularly noticeable, too, that the emphasis here, as by Luther himself, appears to be laid upon the dispensing of an objective gift from God in the Sacrament, and a corresponding receptivity on the part of the communicant. In its view that the nourishment received is a nourishment merely of the soul, the *Confession* is most nearly related to the *Swabian Syngamma of Brenz*. This observation is made by Koestlin,¹ who would thus agree with Schaff, that "the *Tetrapolitan Confession* contains the germ of the Calvinistic view."²

The four cities afterwards signed the Lutheran Confession to join the Smalcald League, but Bucer himself remained true to his Union creed, and reconfessed it on his death-bed.

Zwingli did not attend the Diet of Augsburg, but availed himself of the opportunity to transmit to the Emperor a Confession of his faith.

This *Fidei Ratio* was dated July 3rd, 1530, and was submitted "not merely from a desire to set forth his own individual belief, but with a view to subjecting it, as well as everything else that he had written, to the judgment of the true Church—that is, the Church that is founded on the Word of God" (iv. 1-18).³

Zwingli's *Fidei Ratio* was treated with contempt, and never laid before the Diet.

It begins with the statement, "I believe that in the Holy Eucharist, the true body of Christ is present by the con-

¹ Koestlin, *op. cit.* ii. p. 156.

² Schaff, *Germ. Ref.* ii. p. 720.

³ Jackson, *Zwingli*, Appendix, pp. 466-478. Curtis, *Creeds and Confessions*, p. 199.

templation of faith, *i.e.*, that they who thank the Lord for the kindness bestowed on us in His son, acknowledge that He assumed true flesh ; in it, truly suffered ; truly washed away our sins in His own blood, and thus, everything done by Christ becomes present to them by the contemplation of faith. But that the true body in essence and reality, *i.e.*, the natural body itself, is either present in the Supper or masticated with our mouth or teeth, we not only deny, but firmly maintain is an error opposed to God's Word." Here Zwingli rejects all and every corporeal presence and enjoyment of the body of Christ.

This statement he supports with a *threefold* proof.¹

The *First* proof is out of the Divine Oracles.

The text, "Me ye have not always," excludes the presence of Christ's body, but not the presence of His divinity, for the latter is present, according to another divine Word, "Lo I am with you always." The maintaining of the ubiquity of the humanity of Christ takes away that humanity, for ubiquity belongs only to the divine being.

An illustration for the relation of the divinity to the humanity is the sun, whose body is in one place, while his virtue pervades all things. "The human soul also surmounts the stars and penetrates hell, but the body is in one place."

Other texts which Zwingli quotes are John xvi. 28, Luke xxiv. 51 ("He was parted from them and taken up into heaven"). Luke does not say, "He vanished and rendered Himself invisible." Mark xvi. 19 says, "He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God." He does not say, "He remained there, but rendered His body invisible."

Zwingli also shows that during Christ's earthly life He is always thought of as remaining in one definite place. He was in the manger, on the Cross, at Jerusalem, in the sepulchre. These testimonies deny the presence of Christ's body anywhere else than in heaven.

In the *Second* place, Zwingli deals with the *futility* of the bodily presence. One party affirms that this bodily presence brings forgiveness of sins, but if this is so, then the

¹ Jackson, *op. cit.* p. 473.

disciples obtained this already in the first Supper, and Christ died in vain.

"If that which is bodily eaten imparts the virtue of the Passion and Redemption, then this virtue was imparted before it was acquired. If the body is fed for the Resurrection, as another party asserts, then would this bodily partaking much more heal and relieve our body of sickness. Again, if the natural body of Christ was given to Christ's disciples in the Supper, it necessarily follows that they ate it as it was. But this body of Christ was then susceptible to suffering. It was not yet glorified. But they say that they ate the same body, yet not susceptible to suffering as it was, but the same as it was after the Resurrection. But that would mean that Christ had two bodies—a glorified and an unglorified body. It would mean that He did not truly suffer, and we should be landed in Marcionism."

In the *Third* place, Zwingli proves his thesis from *Patristic* sources. He appeals to Ambrose and Augustine, and concludes, "Let them who wish go now and condemn us for heresy, while they know that by the same word they are condemning the 'Pillar of theologians.' . . . For from these facts it becomes evident that the ancients always spoke symbolically when they attributed so much to the eating of the body in the Supper. They did not say that the sacramental manducation could cleanse the soul. The cleansing of the soul, they asserted, comes from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is spiritual manducation. Of this, these external things are symbols and shadows" (iv. 1-18). Founding on this *threefold proof*, Zwingli rejects all and every corporeal presence and enjoyment of the body of Christ in the Supper.

It may be argued that the *Fidei Ratio* gives no grounds for our contention that in his *third period* (1528-1531) Zwingli returned to his earlier and richer conception of the Lord's Supper. Luther is said to have seen in it the same teaching which he combated in his *Wider die himmelischen Propheten*, but we must remember that here Zwingli was dealing with only one point of the Lutheran doctrine (the presence of the natural body of Christ in the Supper). He certainly emphasises the *Thanksgiving* aspect and the

spiritual presence for the contemplation of faith. But faith to Zwingli was a very rich conception, and in his use of the sun as an illustration we have an anticipation of the *dynamic* theory of Calvin.

There is perhaps no clear indication that in this writing he satisfied Luther's minimum demand, that in the Sacrament we receive a gift. There is, however, no mention of the elements as "bare and empty signs," and when we recollect that during its preparation Zwingli was still smarting under the hard, proud words of Luther, spoken after Marburg, we could hardly expect him to be sweeping in his concessions to the Lutheran position.

It is when we come to Zwingli's "swan song" in the *Auslegung des Christlichen Glaubens* (1531), addressed to Francis I., that we find strong and definite testimony to the rich content of his views on the Lord's Supper. Where could we find better evidence than the following? (iv. p. 42). "We believe that Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper; yea, we believe that there is no communion without such presence. This is the proof. 'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them' (Matthew xviii. 20). How much more is He present, where the congregation is assembled to His honour? But that his body is literally eaten, is far from the truth, because He Himself says, 'I am no more in the world' (John xvii. 11), and the 'Flesh profiteth nothing' (John vi. 63). It is contrary to faith (I mean the holy and true faith, because faith embraces love, fear of God, and reverence, which abhor such carnal and gross eating . . . We believe that the true body of Christ is eaten in the Communion, not in a gross and carnal manner, but in a sacramental and spiritual manner by the religious, believing, and pious heart. And this is in brief the substance of what we maintain in this controversy."

The proof is on the old familiar lines, but we have here assertions of the presence of Christ in the Supper, and of that presence as essential to validity. Further, we have the assertion that the body of Christ is eaten in the Supper "sacramentally and spiritually" (iv. 42).

In fact, we have a doctrine closely approximate to that of Calvin. Calvin at one time spoke of Zwingli's doctrine

as "profane," but in his later writings (II. Defence against Westphal) he recognised it as consonant with his own. He did not deny a difference, but he saw that it was only a difference in emphasis. His defence of Zwingli is chivalrous, but it is evidently sincere. And no one who knows Calvin and his teaching will suspect him of tolerating a doctrine of mere commemoration. There is no reason to doubt that Zwingli would have assented to the view of Overall, "In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the body and blood of Christ, and in fact all of Christ, is offered to the worthy receiver, not by the mode of transubstantiation or consubstantiation, but by the Holy Spirit, working through faith." ¹

There are those who, like Miéville, see no development in the view of Zwingli, and consider his teaching as of one piece throughout.

There are those who ascribe his later and richer testimony to a desire to comply with the demands of Luther.

There are those, again, who see in his teaching a want of clarity, and who compare him with the profound and consistent thinker, Calvin.

Our contention is that there were in his doctrine of the Lord's Supper *three definite phases*.

He had his *first and positive period* (1521-1524) when he combated the Mass as a repeated and propitiatory sacrifice.

There was a *second period* (1524-1528), when he came to grips with Luther, and opposed the presence of the body of Christ "in or sub" the consecrated bread.

We have just been considering the *third period* (1528-1531), where we see traces of his earlier and richer teaching.

In the *second period*, when his writings are mainly controversial, there are passages when he sweeps away more than he intends. This is plainly the explanation of Calvin, who says in his *Second Defence against Westphal*,² "Oekolampadius and Zwingli, at the commencement of the dispute, from being too intent on refuting superstition, did not speak of the Sacrament in sufficiently honourable terms." When Zwingli met with opponents who asserted

¹ Dr. Anderson Scott, *Expositor*, 1901. Darwell Stone, *op. cit.* ii. p. 252.

² *Tracts*, ii. p. 275.

that the body of Christ was "essentially and corporally eaten," he seems at times to surrender a partaking of any kind. But in all such cases his testimony must be corrected by his more positive assertions. "If anyone were to start from Zwingli's positive doctrine as collated from his utterances in the first and third periods, and from scattered utterances in the second, and were patiently to bear in mind the narrowness of the field towards which his criticisms were directed, I venture to think that he would find little difficulty in harmonising even the most negative passages with the 'non-Zwinglian' view which I claim for him."¹

It is noteworthy that throughout his works, and especially in his controversy with Luther, we find Zwingli appealing to Augustine. "Augustine thinks with us," he says to the Emperor Charles.²

At Marburg Luther candidly admitted, "You have Augustine on your side."

Does this point to a misunderstanding on the part of Luther and Zwingli of the teaching of Augustine, or to an ambiguity in the teaching of Augustine himself? ¹ Bishop Gore has remarked upon this ambiguity.

"Augustine's language as a whole is susceptible of being interpreted in the sense of an objective presence (spiritual) in the elements, or it may be fairly interpreted on a receptionist theory like Hooker's. It is in fact somewhat ambiguous."³

Professor MacKinnon also speaks of Augustine's "Incongruous body of religious thought, in which the contradictions are not really unified."⁴

There is certainly more in common between Augustine's view of the Sacrament and Zwingli's than has generally been supposed, and if there is some inconsistency or ambiguity about Zwingli's teaching also, he, too, may be pardoned, and not dubbed a "Zwinglian."¹

¹ Dr. Anderson Scott, *Expositor*, 1901.

² Jackson, *Zwingli*, Appendix, p. 477.

³ Gore, *Dissertations*, p. 232.

⁴ Professor MacKinnon, *op. cit.* p. 56.

ZWINGLI'S DEATH

Zwingli's life came to an untimely end soon after the issue of the *Fidei Ratio*. He fell on the bloody field of Kappel in 1531. Luther was so affected with the intelligence, as he tells us himself, that his sleep was turned into a night of weeping and of tears. Later, however, in 1545, he could regard Zwingli's death as a judgment of God.

CHAPTER VIII

POSITION OF THE QUESTION, WHEN CALVIN BEGAN TO WRITE

Attempts at Mediation by Bucer—The *First Confession of Basel* (1534)—The *First Helvetic Confession* (1536)—The *Wittenberg Concordia* (1536)—Letter of the Swiss to Luther—Luther's Answer to the Swiss Letter—The Ground already prepared for Calvin's Theory in the Teaching of the *Swabian Syngamma*, the *Tetrapolitan Confession*, the *Wittenberg Concordia*, and the Two *Pre-Calvin Swiss Confessions*.

THERE now followed through a series of years the well-intentioned but ill-conducted negotiations of Bucer to effect a general concord. These we have not space to follow in detail. To begin with, it was necessary to satisfy Luther that the *Tetrapolitan Confession* (of which Bucer was the author) involved no essential variation from that of Augsburg.

Next we have Bucer in his first campaign in 1533 at Zurich trying to persuade the Helvetic divines that they might easily come to a similar pacification. They were too honest, however, to fall in with his imagination that the difference could be thus reduced to nothing. They charged him with being unfair to them or to Luther, in pretending to agree with both.¹ After proper preparations we find him in 1535 again on the field, negotiating now with Melanchthon and Luther, and agreeing finally in the *Declaration of Cassel*, in which the bread and wine were said to be "Exhibitive signs involving by sacramental union, the simultaneous presence of Christ's flesh and blood."¹ Then came the third campaign in 1536, resulting in the celebrated *Concord of Wittenberg*.²

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 367 *passim*.

² *Corp. Ref.* iii. p. 75 ff.

It was necessary now to unite the Helvetic Church in the Cassel Formula, for Switzerland was at that time not of one mind. At Bucer's request, the Swiss expressed their view in the *First Confession of Basel* (January, 1534), in order to show the world that they were not fairly liable to the reproach of having the Supper without Christ.

This *Confession* was supposed to have been the production originally of Oekolampadius, and it was now revised and improved by his successor Myconius. On the question of the Lord's Supper it reads as follows:—"In the Lord's Supper (in which with the bread and wine of the Lord are represented and offered to us by the minister of the Church the true body and blood of Christ), bread and wine remain unchanged. We firmly believe, however, that Christ Himself is the food of believing souls unto eternal life, and that our souls, by true faith upon Christ crucified, are made to eat and drink the flesh and blood of Christ; so that we, members of His body, live in Him, as He also lives in us; whereby we shall at the last day, by Him and in Him, rise to everlasting life, blessedness and joy."¹

Here we have a decided advance in Oekolampadius' teaching. It is not merely the crucified Christ who is our soul-food, but the Person of Christ enters into mystical union with us, so that we become members of His mystical body. Here he gives us the groundlines of the subsequent teaching of Calvin. And Oekolampadius wrote this *Confession* a year before Zwingli's death! This *Confession* contained in outline the very view of Bucer.²

Of the other Swiss cities, Zurich was more disposed to adhere to the narrower conception, though favourably disposed also to the idea of union. Bern for a long time clung most stiffly to the same teaching, under the influence of Megander, a zealot on the Swiss side, who may be compared to Westphal on the Lutheran side. A strong counter influence, however, gained ground here also more and more. Finally, Bucer and Capito were empowered to represent the general Helvetic Council, and to negotiate Articles of agreement with Luther and the Saxon divines on the basis

¹ Schaff, *Creeeds of Christendom*, p. 387. Curtis, *Creeeds and Confessions*, p. 202. Hospinian, *Hist. Sac.* ii. p. 224.

² Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 370, note.

of the *First Helvetic Confession*, published a short time before.

This *Confession*, which is sometimes called the *Second Confession of Basel*, was framed by Bullinger, Myconius and Grynaeus in 1536. Its language on the Lord's Supper is as follows¹:—"Concerning the mystical Supper, we thus judge that the Lord in it truly offers to His people His own body and blood, that is Himself, to the end that He may live more and more in them, and they in him. Not that the body and blood are naturally united with the bread and wine, or locally included in them, or are made carnally present in any way; but that the Lord Himself, through the ministry of the Church, makes the true communication of His body and blood to be exhibited not as perishable food for the body, but as the aliment of eternal life."

This *Confession* is a further anticipation of the teaching of Calvin. In opposition to the narrow Swiss view, it is taught that not merely Christ's merits, but Christ's Person is communicated to us.

In opposition to Luther, it says nothing of an oral manducation, or of a communication to the unworthy, but emphasises the intimate nature of the mystical union between the soul and Christ.²

On the basis of the *First Helvetic Confession*, the *Wittenberg Concordia* was drawn up in 1536. This formula was prepared by Melancthon, and contains the following propositions³:—

(A) We confess in the words of Irenaeus that the Eucharist consists of two things—a heavenly and an earthly. Therefore we feel and teach that with the bread and wine are truly and substantially present, exhibited and received, the body and blood of Christ.

(B) And although we deny transubstantiation, and do not believe that there is any local inclusion in the bread, nor any combination enduring beyond the actual duration of the Sacrament, nevertheless, we grant that the bread is, by a sacramental union, the body of Christ, *i.e.*, we believe

¹ Schaff, *Creeds of the Evang. Prot. Churches*, p. 225. Curtis, *op. cit.* p. 203. Niemeyer, *Coll. Conf.* p. 112.

² Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 380.

³ *Corp. Ref.* iii. p. 75 ff.

that, with the offered bread, there is at the same time, present and exhibited, the body of Christ.

(C) Hence we believe that this Institution of the Sacrament has validity in the Church, and does not depend on the worthiness of the administrant, nor of the recipient. Wherefore, as Paul says that the unworthy also eat, we therefore believe that the body and blood of the Lord are truly offered even to the unworthy, and that the unworthy receive them, where the words and ordinances of Christ are preserved. But such receive only to their own condemnation, because they abuse the Sacrament, since they employ it without penitence and without faith.

"This *Concordia* is an interesting document, and shows beforehand," as Dorner says, "that a standpoint in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, such as afterwards became through Calvin the ruling one in the Reformed Churches, was acknowledged by Luther himself to be one with which brotherly communion was Christianly lawful."¹ It is, however, a contradictory formula. It first denies the local inclusion of the body of Christ in the bread, and then asserts that it is truly received in it by unbelievers as well as by believers. To such a Concord, of course, Switzerland could not consent, and all pains were taken to let the fact be known. A delegation from Basel waited on Bucer to protest. Eight days he laboured to satisfy them, but in vain. Grynaeus told him plainly that he wrested the sense of Luther in trying to bring it into harmony with the Helvetic Church. Then came new transactions in Switzerland, in which Bucer laboured in vain to reconcile the Swiss to his construction of the *Wittenberg Concordia*. At last it was determined by the Swiss to write to Luther himself on the subject and get his sense, as it were, directly from his own mouth.

In this letter the Swiss reaffirmed their adherence to the old Zwinglian propositions that Christ has departed from the world; is sitting at the right hand of God; and is not again to be brought down thence into the earthly state; and that the body of Christ cannot therefore be corporeally eaten, nor can Christ Himself be present everywhere. They then declared that, according to Bucer's interpreta-

¹ Dorner, *op. cit.* i. p. 335.

tion, the new formula would not alter their old Confession, to which they wished to adhere; that the bodily ascension of Christ to heaven, in consequence of which He is no longer carnally in the world, but remains in His heavenly state, would not be denied, and it would not be questioned that He is apprehended and received in the Lord's Supper by the believing heart. In conclusion, they asserted that "In the Sacrament, the main thing is God's gift, namely, the body and blood of Christ, yea, the body which has been delivered to death for us, and the blood which has been shed on the Cross to wash away our sins.

"We deny not that the body and blood of Christ are eaten and enjoyed in the Supper as the food of souls unto eternal life. But this we deny, that the body of Christ is eaten in itself corporeally or as flesh, or that He is everywhere present in His body in a corporal or natural way."¹ This letter was carried to Luther by Bucer himself.

Luther's Answer came nine months afterwards, respectful and friendly, and, strangely enough, acquiescing in their explanation and position. It is difficult to understand Luther's attitude at this time. He must have been aware that the Swiss theologians were at variance with him on essential points, and yet he was willing to extend to them the hand of conciliation and peace. We remember, however, the moderation and kindness with which he treated the Bohemian Brethren in regard to their Sacramental theory. We remember also his magnanimous attitude to the *Swabian Syngramma*, and we suggest that his bearing to the Swiss is to be explained by the fact that he recognised that in their case, too, there was a positive assertion of the reception of an objective heavenly gift as the essential feature of the Sacrament. He recognised in the *Letter of the Swiss* that they had advanced beyond the sterile confession of Zwingli in his middle period. In other words, Luther now distinguished between the so-called "Zwinglian" view and the view of Calvin which was already in the air. Luther must have been aware that a deeper view of the sacramental presence was quietly striking its roots into the Protestant world, and mounting upwards into

¹ Koestlin, *op. cit.* ii. p. 173 ff. Hospinian, ii. p. 150. Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 386.

mature strength. For this was the actual fact. This deeper view was not confined to any section of the Church, but comes before us as the spontaneous product of its general life.¹ We find it widely active in the German Church under the banner of the *Augsburg Confession*.

Its main representative here was Melanchthon, the author of this *Confession*. In the Helvetic Church, as we have seen, there was a parallel movement that served to bring in gradually a richer development of the Zwinglian doctrine.

The significance of the Lord's Supper as a Commemoration was still insisted on, but attention was now turned more than at the beginning to the idea of a real participation in Christ's *life* as the necessary condition and support of the other interest.

The *unio mystica* was now coming into its own. We have seen that Zwingli himself approximated to this in his final period.

We have also seen that Oekolampadius, in the *First Confession of Basel*, had come to the deeper view.

The ground was prepared for Calvin. He found himself in a congenial atmosphere. We have seen his precursors in the *Swabian Syngamma*, the *Tetrapolitan Confession*, the *Wittenberg Concordia*, and in Switzerland itself in the *Pre-Calvin Confessions*.

¹ Nevin, *The Mystical Presence*, p. 81.

CHAPTER IX

CALVIN'S EARLY TEACHING ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

Calvin's Early Life and Preparation—The *First Edition of the Institutes* (1536) and its Teaching on the Lord's Supper—Comparison of the *First Edition of the Institutes* with the *De Captivitate Babylonica* of Luther—Calvin's Relation to Zwingli, Bucer, and Oekolampadius.

BEFORE we proceed to the formal discussion of Calvin's theory of the Lord's Supper it will be necessary to take a brief glance at his personality and history.¹ Calvin seemed destined to be a mediator. By birth he was connected with two nations. His father, Gerhard Calvin of Noyon, in Picardy, was French. His mother, Anna Franke of Cambray, was of German blood. He first saw the light on July 10th, 1509, and he was educated with the children of the noble family of Mommor. By his natural ability he soon surpassed his fellow-students. In his twelfth year his father procured for him an appointment in the Chapelle de la Gesine, and sent him to the High School at Paris. Here he met Maturnius Cordier, who grounded him in the Scholastic Theology. It is a noteworthy circumstance that his early training was Scholastic, not Humanistic. This enabled him to understand and appreciate the essence of the Lutheran system of doctrine, and prepared him for his life-work—the definition and consolidation of the Reformed Theology. Having reached his eighteenth year, he became acquainted for the first time with a Bible, and soon began

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* volumes i. and ii. Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii, p. 409 ff. Henry, *Life of Calvin*, i. p. 21 f. Bungener, *Calvin, sa vie, son œuvre, et ses écrits*. Erichson, *Bibliographia Calviniana*. Penning, *Life and Times of Calvin*. Walker (Williston), *John Calvin*. Dyer, *Life of Calvin*. Stähelin, *Johannes Calvin*. Kampschulte, *Johann Calvin, seine Kirche und seine Stadt in Genf*.

to discover the errors of the Roman Catholic Church. At the suggestion of his father, he entered the University of Orleans in order to study law. But however diligently he devoted himself to this science, the voice of conscience urged him yet more strongly to the examination and understanding of the Scriptures.

He was greatly assisted in this by Melchior Wolmar, who taught him Greek, and strengthened his still unsettled principles, so that he began to proclaim his new convictions by preaching. To this Wolmar he was in great measure indebted for his conversion. It seems that in the case of Calvin this conversion was effected without a protracted struggle.¹ In his Preface to the Psalms he relates that he was so fixed in Popish superstition that it seemed difficult indeed to free him from such a quagmire, when God overcame him by a sudden conversion, and subjected him to His will. His studies in Jurisprudence were, however, by no means fruitless. We see the traces of the trained legal mind in the *Premier Projet d'Organisation ecclésiastique à Genève of 1537* and the *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques of 1541*. These are both models of orderly arrangement.

By this time the Reformed religion had spread in northern and central France through the influence of Luther's writings. In the south, Zwingli's doctrine became known. A bitter persecution followed, and now it was proved that Calvin was more a Reformer than a Jurist. Nicolas Cop, the newly elected Rector of the Sorbonne in Paris, was obliged, according to custom, to deliver an oration on the day on which the Roman Catholics held the Feast of All Saints. Calvin prepared the speech, and wrote with great freedom on the pure Gospel, and on justification by faith. Cop read the address, and immediately he and its author were compelled to flee. Calvin found shelter in the court of the Queen of Navarre, who quieted the storm and lessened the general irritation.²

For some time he led a wandering life, and we hear of him at Paris, Orleans, and Strasbourg, where he met Bucer

¹ Lindsay, *History of the Reformation*, ii. p. 97. Wernle, *Die Bekehrung Calvins*, p. 84. ff. Lang, *Die Bekehrung Johannis Calvins*. Doumergue, *op. cit.* i. p. 344 f.

² *Ibid.* 331 ff.

and Capito. At last he came to Noyon, where he sold his inheritance in order to convey his sisters to Basel or Strasbourg. We hurry over these travels and experiences. But two points are important in connection with them.¹

I. Calvin felt himself so much at home in Strasbourg and Basel that he resolved to take up his residence in one of these two places. Later, when he was banished from Geneva, he returned to Strasbourg. He felt himself akin to Bucer, Oekolampadius, and Capito. These were the men who preserved the mean between Luther and Zwingli. This was Calvin's spiritual home, in the middle point, where the north and south line that connected Lutheranism and Zwinglianism crossed the east and west line that stretched between Germany and France.

II. Another circumstance of great importance is, that in his first residence in Basel in the year 1536 he completed the *First Edition of the Institutes*.² He brought his system of doctrine from France as a finished product. It cannot be said that it was evolved under Lutheran or Zwinglian influence, for his residence in Basel or Strasbourg was too short for Oekolampadius or Bucer to have inspired his writings. Besides, Calvin himself assures us that he had already completed his whole system of doctrine in his twentieth year, and that he never deviated in one point from it. We have thus in the *First Edition of the Institutes* a document of his own independent, original view. It was a work which was written when he was neither under the influence of the Zwinglian Farel nor of the Lutheran theologians. "The Institutes of the Christian Religion is Calvin and Calvinism complete."³

Let us now see how it deals with the *subject of the Lord's Supper*.

"The other Sacrament of the Christian Church is the bread sanctified in Christ's body, and the wine sanctified in His blood. We call it either the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist, because in it we are fed spiritually by the kindness of God, and we on our part, give thanks for His

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 441.

² *Christianae Religionis Institutio*, Basilae, 1536 (Geneva University Library).

³ Doumergue, *op. cit.* iv. p. 1.

goodness" (*Opera*, i. page 236). This strikes the note for the discussion. In order that we may have a true conception of the Sacrament, we must regard it as a spiritual thing. In this Holy Feast, God feeds not our bodies, but our souls.

"As we see the bread given to us as a sign of Christ's body; we must endeavour to understand the following comparison. Thus, as the bread nourishes the life of the body, upholds and supports it, so the body of Christ is the food and support of our spiritual life.

"Since the wine is the symbol of the blood, so we believe that Christ acts spiritually on the soul, as wine acts on our body" (i. p. 238).

"But let us believe that the Sacrament is spiritual—a something whereby God will feed our soul, not our stomach. Let us seek Christ not as He is seen and apprehended by the bodily senses, but as He is recognised by His presence in our soul" (i. p. 240).

Calvin makes his position clear in its relation to Luther and Zwingli. In one pregnant sentence he defines where he stands in regard to the debated question of the "right hand of God." "Christ, having ascended with His own proper body into heaven, there sits at the right hand of the Father, that is, He rules in the might, power and glory of the Father" (i. p. 246).

These words are very significant, and are prophetic of that office of mediation which Calvin so consistently fulfilled.¹

For Zwingli the "session at the right hand of God" was a hindrance for the coming of Christ to us, although, let it be clearly understood, only for a local descent. Zwingli opposed the doctrine of ubiquity and the consequent bodily presence, and in his middle period he was satisfied with this negative result. He said little there of the mystical union. He did not concern himself with the question how, without detriment to the "session at the right hand of God," and without ubiquity, we may have a real communion with Christ.

Calvin now takes up the matter in a positive way. He also believes that Christ is separated from us as regards His body, but he expounds the "session at the right hand

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 413.

of God " as a sharing in the Omnipotence and Majesty of God. What follows from that? "This kingdom," he says, "is bounded by no limits of space and is circumscribed by no dimensions. It is extended according to His will " (i. p. 247).

"He exercises His dominion (*virtutem*) in heaven and on earth. By this He shows His presence in power and virtue. He is ever with His people. He lives in them. He upholds, strengthens, and defends them, and this no less manifestly, than if He were present in the body (*In iis vivat eos sustineat, confirmet, vegetet, conservet, non secus ac si corpore adesset*) " (i. p. 247).

Here Calvin strives to raise himself above the antithesis in which Luther and Zwingli were entangled. For both, the chief question was as to whether Christ's glorified body was, as regards its substance, circumscribed or uncircumscribed. Both held that a real union of Christ with us can take place only if Christ's body is uncircumscribed. Zwingli, in his middle period, in order not to have to concede the uncircumscription of Christ's body, forsook or rather attenuated his original teaching of a mystical union, and was content with a mere presence of the spirit of Christ in us.

Luther's one thought was to retain the boon of the mystical union, and he could not recognise and reconcile this with the circumscription of Christ's body.

Where Calvin was original was in his maintaining that the circumscription of the body does not exclude a real union with Christ. This was the *great, fundamental thought* of his theory, in that he shows that the circumscription of the glorified body of Christ does no injury to the real mystical union with Him. Leibnitz considers that the reconciliation of the Confessions (Lutheran and Reformed) is found in the hypothesis of Calvin, that the substance of the body consists in its primitive power, active and passive, and that the immediate application of the power constitutes the presence of such substance, even without dimensions. He has also acknowledged that Calvin has so conceived of the idea of corporeality, that he has succeeded in proving that the mystical union with Christ is not prevented by Christ's body being circumscribed.¹

¹ *Pensées de Leibnitz*, 2nd edition, p. 106.

This is also Ebrard's opinion. "The permanent substance even of a human body is not the mass of chemical ingredients. It is the psychic virtue (*Kraft*) which lives in the organism. Much more, then, does a glorified body consist in this dynamic energy or virtue."¹

This is doubtless Calvin's conception of "body," and when he speaks of Christ exercising His power (*virtus*) where He pleases, he has this idea in mind. He does not regard Christ's body in a natural way like Luther, who was led by this to a doctrine of ubiquity. He regards this body as pure energy or power. If Zwingli's theory can be designated as "historical," Luther's as "wunderhaft," we might characterise Calvin's conception as "mystical," or more correctly as "dynamical."²

On the other hand, Calvin makes it quite clear that he does not deny Christ's ascension—His bodily separation from us, and the circumscription of that body. Christ has His glorified body in heaven. His body is not a diffused, invisible substance. His body is a formed, expressive, visible projection of his soul. But that does not prevent Him communicating Himself to us as power.

Luther and Zwingli share the hypothesis, that if we are to enjoy a union with the glorified body of Christ, it must be local and dimensional, and that, therefore, the body of Christ must come to us in a local and physical way. Luther teaches this. Zwingli, in order not to have to grant this, is led sometimes to deny the possibility of any such union.

Calvin teaches that Christ is in heaven, and we are on earth, but that, in spite of this spatial separation, there is a real mystical union, namely, a non-local, non-dimensional, supra-spatial, virtual union.

With Luther, the participator is locally limited, and the body of Christ is extended or ubiquitous.

With Calvin, Christ's body is circumscribed and locally in heaven, but the mode of communion is super-local. Christ's circumscribed body has the omnipotent power, without any local descent, to be really with us and in us. As Christ projects His soul in heaven, He projects it into each communicant. It is the same psychic, dynamic sub-

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 414.

² Schultz, *Zur Lehre vom heiligen Abendmahl*, p. 4.

stance which penetrates us, lives in us, and not merely penetrates our spirits, but forms a new focus (*Mittelpunkt*) for our psychical-bodily life.¹ "In this way it is, that the body and blood of Christ are offered to us in the Sacrament; but not in the previous way referred to, *i.e.* there is no oral manducation" (i. 248). Calvin thus substitutes for the outward communion an inward communion. We do not receive Christ's body in a dimensional and local manner, but virtually, so that Christ lives in us, not merely with His spirit, but with the psychic energy of His whole divine-human person. It is this same kind of union we enjoy even without the Sacrament. The body of Christ is therefore communicated to us, not as a natural substance but as power or energy, truly and effectively, not naturally. "For the sake of clearness, I say that His body is truly and really, but not naturally offered to us, and this I say, to indicate that it is not the actual body that is given for us, but all the benefits which Christ by His body, has procured for us. This is the presence of the body which the intention of the Sacrament requires" (i. p. 247). That Calvin reckons as these benefits not only the atonement won for us through Christ's death, but also the *life* of Christ in us, is quite clear from the above quotation. His position is thus quite distinct from Luther's. Indeed, the opposition to Luther is clear and plain.

COMPARISON OF THE *DE CAPTIVITATE BABYLONICA* (1520) AND THE *INSTITUTES* (1536)

Doumergue² has drawn an instructive parallel between the teaching of Calvin in the *Institutes* of 1536 and that of Luther in the *De Captivitate Babylonica* of 1520. Luther gave there his classical comparison in exposition of consubstantiation. "Why should Christ not be able to include His body under the substance of the bread, as well as within the accidents? Fire and iron—two substances are so mingled in red-hot iron, that each part of it is both iron and fire. Why may not the glorious body of Christ much more be in every part of the substance of the bread?"³

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 416.

² Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 569.

³ Wace and Buchheim, *op. cit.* pp. 158 f.

Thus we have, 1st, consubstantiation ; 2nd, the glorified body ; and 3rd, the identification of the bread and the body.

"If I cannot understand how the bread can be the body of Christ, I shall bring my understanding into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and firmly believe in simple adherence to His words, not only that the body of Christ is in the bread, but that the bread is the body of Christ." And Luther insists, "If philosophy does not understand these things, the Holy Spirit is greater than Aristotle."¹ Now Calvin, in the *First Edition of the Institutes*, formally repels the *three* points of the Lutheran doctrine.

1st. The flesh of Christ is not on earth. "At the resurrection, He resumed it, and carried it to heaven." And if the presence of Christ is "true and efficacious," it is none the less "altogether spiritual."

"Let us think first, that the Sacrament is a spiritual thing. Let us be satisfied to obtain it spiritually" (i. p. 241).

2nd. In the Supper, there can be no question of the glorified body of which Luther speaks.

"Others argue more subtly that what is offered (*exhibetur*) in the Sacrament is the glorious and immortal body. But I ask you what body the Lord gave to His disciples the night before He suffered. Foolish one, what do you ask from the power of God, that He should make the bread to be at the same time flesh and not flesh?" (i. pp. 240. 245).

3rd. Calvin protests directly against those who hold that the bread is the body (i. p. 240).

"Cry out as you please, 'This is the body and the blood,' I hold, on the contrary, that it is the testament in the body and the blood" (i. p. 248).

It is possible, of course, that Calvin, in combating ideas which were more or less common to the Catholics and Luther, did not have Luther specially in mind. He has none the less emphatically contradicted him.²

It is equally false to say that Calvin was originally a "Zwinglian" in the popular sense. We find in him rather an organic development of Zwingli's teaching. To Calvin, bread and wine are not merely a pledge that Christ has died for us. To him, the act of the Sacrament is an act wherein Christ communicates to us the full power of His personality

¹ See note 3, p. 119.

² Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 570.

with all the resulting benefits of this living union. From the body of Christ there streams a power over and above the ordinary influence of the Holy Ghost, of which in the Supper believers are recipients. The body of Christ is not now present anywhere on earth as substance, *i.e.* as natural substance, but it is present as power. In the Eucharist, Christ is present with *omnia beneficia*. On this account, the words of Institution do not speak of the body of Christ apart from His benefits, or of the benefits apart from the body and blood whereby they are procured. Bread and wine are to him not bare signs. He rejects the opinion that the bread is only a sign or figure of the body, just as strongly as he refuses to believe that the body is *under* the bread. Bread and wine are not merely symbols of the death of Christ, but also, and pre-eminently, symbols of the living union with Christ. The act of the Holy Supper is an act of real, true reception of Christ.

This teaching of Calvin in 1536 has many points of resemblance with the testimony of Oekolampadius, after his intercourse with Melanchthon at Marburg, and his subsequent correspondence with him.

It was expressed by Oekolampadius in the *First Confession of Basel*¹ (1534). Bucer held somewhat similar views.² What Calvin did was to provide a more secure foundation. He did this by furnishing a deeper conception of corporeality and of the "session at the right hand of God." He also furnished a more profound exegesis, in that he did not put so much stress on the words of Institution, but regarded the *transaction* of the Lord's Supper as the important thing, and emphasised the symbolical nature of it.

He went beyond the assertion of the symbolical meaning of the bread and wine as food, to the assertion that in the Supper there takes place an analogous nourishment of the new man through Christ, the Living Bread. It is remarkable, as Ebrard has pointed out, how Bucer, Melanchthon, Haner, Brenz, and Calvin all came independently to this teaching of a real enjoyment of Christ in the Holy Supper.³

¹ This work, p. 108.

² Klingenburg, *Das Verhältnis Calvin zu Butzer* (1912).

³ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 418.

CHAPTER X

CALVIN'S FIRST RESIDENCE IN GENEVA— TEACHING ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

Calvin in Geneva—Calvin at the Disputation at Lausanne—The Ten Theses of Lausanne and their Teaching on the Lord's Supper—Calvin at the Bern Synod. . . . The Lord's Supper—The Articles of 1537 and their Teaching on the Lord's Supper—The Catechism of 1537 and its Teaching on the Lord's Supper—The Confession of 1537 and its Teaching on the Lord's Supper—The Synod of Lausanne, September, 1537—The *Confessio de Eucharistia*—The Importance of this Confession—The New State of Parties in 1537—Calvin's Expulsion from Geneva.

WE have followed Calvin in the first period of his life, where he developed his own individual doctrine of the Supper quite independently. With his departure from France (1536), in his twenty-seventh year, there begins a *second* period. He made up his mind, as we have seen, to reside in Basel or Strasbourg as a private student, but now, almost against his will, his path was diverted to Geneva, which was then under the influence of the Zurich teaching. It was Farel who captivated him with strong and weighty words. The question now arises whether Calvin was intellectually and spiritually influenced by Farel. Calvin came to Geneva in August, 1536. His installation into office was marked by no flourish of trumpets.¹ Very soon, however, an opportunity arose for him to display his powers. He accompanied Farel to a Disputation at Lausanne on 1st October, when the ten theses prepared by Farel were the basis of discussion.² Calvin did not speak till Tuesday, 5th October. The real presence of Christ in the Supper was then the subject of debate. A Roman Catholic

¹ Gautier, *Histoire de Genève*, ii. p. 447 f.

² Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 214.

representative had read a long treatise, laboriously prepared, in which he reproached the Reformed preachers for despising the ancient and holy teachers. Then Calvin arose, and with his terrible irony and astonishing learning he affirmed that "the Catholics do not hold them (the Fathers) in so great honour as we, and will not condescend to employ their time in reading their writings." He next proceeded to quote from memory and to explain the opinions of Tertullian, Chrysostom, and Augustine. He concluded his quotation with the words, "Everyone can easily perceive how rashly you affirm that the ancient Fathers are against us. You have not seen the covers, far less the leaves of their books." ¹

As regards the *Holy Supper*, he summed up his views as follows:—"It is a spiritual communion, by which, 'en vertu et en efficace,' He makes us partakers of all that we can receive of grace in His body and His blood. It is all spiritual, *i.e.* by the bond (*lien*) of His Spirit." ²

Doumergue relates that Calvin's words created a most profound sensation. Farel voiced immediately the feelings of the majority of the Assembly, and cried, "How wise and good and great is God! He has had mercy on His poor flock, wandering in the desert, and has restored it to the sheepfold."

Many conversions were made, and the ecclesiastical consequences of the theological contest soon followed. Calvin was credited with having accomplished a great work.

We find him again, October 16th, 1536, at the Bern Synod, where the subject of discussion was the *Wittenberg Concordia*. Bucer and Capito recommended it warmly to the Swiss, but the Synod considered it ambiguous. .

One of the delegates, however, observed that there ought to be no schism in the Churches. "If that happens," he said, "the Church is doomed." We do not know exactly who the delegate was, but we think it highly possible, as Doumergue suggests, that it would be Calvin, "Le grand conciliateur des Protestants." ²

It was at Geneva that Calvin was to do his great work. From the end of 1536 he was fully recognised as the

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 214.

² *Ibid.* p. 215 f.

colleague of Farel. On 24th May we read, "The question arose of the *Edicts* necessary to be drawn up for the unity of the State."¹

These were promulgated on 10th November, 1536, and are very informative, as they reveal the important place which the Lord's Supper occupied in Calvin's idea of Church government and discipline.

Professor Choisy remarks that "Calvin, the author, demands in them a share in the prerogatives of the State which will be very unwillingly granted. As in other Reformed Swiss cantons, the magistrate has, up till now, had full authority over ecclesiastical matters. He has served himself heir to the powers of the dethroned bishop, and has held the prerogative of excommunication. It is then very improbable that He will divest himself of such privileges."²

The *Articles* begin thus :³

"It is certain that a Church cannot be said to be well regulated, unless the Supper of our Lord is frequently celebrated."

The proposals for regulating the matter follow.

"It is very desirable that the Communion of the Holy Supper should be celebrated at least every Sunday, when the Church is assembled in congregation, in view of the great comfort that believers receive from it in every way. And, indeed, it was not instituted by Jesus, as a commemorative feast, to be celebrated once or twice a year, but for the frequent exercise of our faith and love. . . . This custom was the practice of the Ancient Church, until the abominable custom of Masses was introduced. . . . Now, it would be difficult to demolish with one stroke a custom so firmly established. . . . For the infirmity of the people is such, that there is the danger, that this so sacred and excellent mystery would come to be despised, if it were celebrated too often. . . . Having regard to that, it has seemed well to us . . . that this Holy Supper should be celebrated once a month."

¹ *Registres du Conseil*, vol. xxx., MSS. in the Geneva Consistory.

² Choisy, *La Théocratie à Genève*, p. 16 f.

³ Herminjard, iv. p. 154. Borgeaud *L'adoption de la Réforme par le peuple de Genève*.

The *Articles* then deal with the question as to who shall participate in the Holy Supper, and this raises the problem of discipline and excommunication. "But the first rule to be observed with the greatest care is this, that the Holy Feast be not soiled or contaminated by people taking part in it, who are of manifestly evil character. For in the profanation of His Sacrament, our Lord is greatly dishonoured. We must take care that the pollution that so dishonours God shall not be carelessly passed over. It is necessary that those who are entrusted with the discipline of the Church, should see that those who come to the Communion, are approved members of Jesus Christ. . . . And that those who do not repent, after being admonished, are cut off from the Holy Communion of the Church."

The Holy Supper becomes thus the key-stone of the arch of discipline.

Calvin has been criticised for the rigour of his disciplinary acts, but, as Doumergue has pointed out, "That rigour and that discipline were already practised in Switzerland long before his time."

"What is original in Calvin," says Doumergue, "is the spirit of pious austerity which he poured into the old forms." ¹

Above all, we have to remember that his most precious interest was to preserve the Genevan theocracy, and to defend the Holy Table from all defilement and abuse." ²

The *Articles* deal with three other subjects—singing, marriage, and the religious instruction of the young. "It is very necessary in order to preserve the people in purity of doctrine, that the children from their early years should be instructed to give a reason for their faith. . . . To attain this result the ministers present a Catechism." ³

THE CATECHISM OF 1537

"This Catechism is, in view of its brevity and clearness, the spring from whence we can most easily imbibe a knowledge of this great religious system." ⁴

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 226.

² Choisy, *op. cit.* p. 16.

³ Herminjard, iv. p. 158.

⁴ Rilliet et Dufour, *Le Catéchisme français*, p. 43.

As a résumé of the *Institutes*, the Catechism does not present any new teaching on the Lord's Supper.

The section, "De la Cène du Seigneur," is contained in one column of volume xxii. p. 70 of the *Corpus Reformatorum*. It is a brief statement of essential points.¹

"The promise which is added (*adjoustée*) to the mystery of the Supper declares plainly for what end it is instituted. It confirms to us the fact that the body of our Lord was once given for us in such a way (*tellement*), that it is now ours, and will be ours eternally, and that His blood once shed for us will always be ours. The signs are the bread and wine, under which the Lord presents to us the true communion of His body and His blood, but spiritually."

We have already noted almost identical words in the *Institutes* of 1536.

The Catechism now refers to Luther's doctrine.²

"That which pertains to spiritual things, does not require an enclosed presence, either of the body (*chair*) under the bread, or of the blood under the wine, for although (*combienque*) Christ having ascended into heaven, has departed from the earth on which we are still pilgrims, no distance can prevent His virtue from being communicated to us. Of this truth, He has given us a clear and certain proof (*enseignement*), that we may be assured that Christ with His riches is present to us, not less really than if He were actually before our eyes, to be touched with our hands."

Here we have Calvin's "dynamical" view again set forth. He is still all against a bodily presence. Christ's "virtue" is the all-important thing. This "virtue" has a further property. "And not only does this great 'virtue' assure our spirits of their immortality, but it also renders our flesh certain of the same. For, it is vivifying. Our flesh is vivified by His immortal flesh, and shares in some manner in its immortality." This is a thought of Luther which, as we have seen, he in after days abandoned. Calvin here propounds it, but, like Luther, he provides no explanation. We encounter it frequently, however, in his later works.

¹ *Corpus Reformatorum*, xxii. p. 70.

² Rilliet et Dufour, *Le Catéch. français*, p. 43. *Corp. Reform.* xxii. p. 70.

In the next paragraph he speaks of the connection between the signs and the things they signify.

"Moreover, under bread and wine are represented the body and blood, in order that we may learn not only that they are ours, but that they are ours for life and nourishment. Thus, when we see the bread sanctified in the body of Christ, we must conceive the similitude, that as the bread nourishes, sustains and preserves the life of the body, so the body of Christ is the food and protection of our spiritual life. When the wine is presented to us as a sign of the blood, we have likewise to think that such benefits as it confers on the body, we receive spiritually in the blood of Christ."

This is the utmost meaning that Calvin will grant to the signs.

He speaks of them sometimes as instruments, but to him the bond (*lien*) between the believer and Christ was the Holy Spirit. He warns against a too exalted view of the signs, but he also guards against their degradation and despising. In a final passage he speaks of the Supper as an incitement to thanksgiving and mutual love and charity.

"Now the mystery, while it is a proof of the divine largesse, ought to exhort us to be grateful for such manifest beneficence. We ought to exalt it and to celebrate it with thanksgiving. And further, let us be so united one to another, as the members of one and the same body are bound together. For no goad can be so sharp and pointed to incite us to mutual charity as the example of Christ. Christ in giving Himself to us exhorts us to give and spend ourselves for others. Christ in making Himself common to all, makes us also to be one in Him."

Here Calvin touches on the significance of the Lord's Supper as, what Wernle¹ designates, a *Gemeinschaftszeichen*, a "community token." Seeberg, in the latest edition of his work, relates this to Luther's earlier teaching.² Wernle is of opinion that here Calvin approaches nearer to Zwingli than to Luther in his *Mahnung zur Bruderliebe* (exhortation to brotherly love).¹

¹ Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 108.

² Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 608.

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH OF 1537

The *Catechism* had in view the children and the future generations, but the Reformers were also concerned with the present generation, and they demanded that there should be a careful reorganisation of the Church. This was an important and delicate question, as to "those who should be received as members, and those who ought to be rejected."

The *Catechism* was thus followed by another document, entitled "*Confession of Faith*, which all citizens and inhabitants of Geneva and subjects of the country ought to swear that they will keep and hold." ¹

It has always been a debated question what part, if any, Calvin took in the production of this *Confession*.

Rilliet ² is of opinion that Calvin was not its sole author. Heyer regards it as a joint production of Calvin and Farel. Doumergue has made a critical comparison of the vocabularies of Calvin and Farel, and he holds that its authorship is still an open question. "Adhuc sub judice lis est." ³ Whatever be its origin, we have in this document the formulation of a great principle, that the Calvinistic Church is founded on the individual confession of faith. This, again, is related to Calvin's real and genuine anxiety to *preserve the purity of the Lord's Table*. "This preoccupation tormented us cruelly every time it was necessary to dispense the Lord's Supper. All were willing to partake of it, although the faith of the greater number was unknown to us, or more frequently suspect. In consequence, the unfortunate were fed on the anger of God, instead of being nourished on His life. That is why we have not found any other means of appeasing our conscience, than by demanding that those who wish to be admitted to this sacred and spiritual Feast, should be enabled to do so by a declaration of faith under the banner of Jesus Christ." ⁴

On the subject of the Lord's Supper, this Confession contains significant words which reveal that Calvin was already influencing the doctrine of the Genevan Church.

¹ Heyer, *Église de Genève*, p. 253.

² Rilliet, Preface to *Catechism*.

³ Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 239.

⁴ Rilliet, p. 132.

It shows a distinct advance on the teaching of Zwingli during his middle period. "The Supper of the Lord," says *Article 16*, "is a sign by which, under the bread and wine, He represents to us the true spiritual communion which we have in His body and blood, and we acknowledge that according to His ordinance, it is to be distributed in the congregation of believers, in order that those who wish to have Jesus for their life, may be participators of Him (*afin que tous ceulx qui veulent avoir Jesus pour leur vie, en soyent participans*)".¹

We see that the main tendency is still "Zwinglian." Bread and wine are still signs, and not *signa exhibitiva*, as with Calvin, but *signa representiva*, as with Zwingli. They make the truth known and clear to the thoughts. But it shows a Calvinistic influence in this, that the truth which the signs represent and symbolically display is not merely the truth that Christ *died* for us, but pre-eminently, that we are in real spiritual communion with Him, and have Him for our life.

CONFESSIO FIDEI DE EUCHARISTIA

The infant Church of Geneva, "l'église toute jeune et trop tendre,"² was very soon embroiled in doctrinal controversies. Peter Caroli, the first pastor of Lausanne, raised the charge of Arianism against Farel and Calvin, at a Synod in Lausanne (May, 1537), because they avoided in their Confession the metaphysical terms, Trinity and Person, and refused, at Caroli's dictation, to sign the Athanasian Creed with its damnatory clauses. A Synod was held at Bern in September, 1537, in connection with this charge. This Synod was attended by Bucer, Capito, Viret, Farel, and Calvin.

Here they presented the *Confessio Fidei de Eucharistia*, a document of great importance for the subject under discussion.³

¹ Heyer, *op. cit.* p. 257.

² Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 251.

³ Hundeshagen, *op. cit.* p. 79. Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 426 ff. Henry, *op. cit.* Appendix i.

This Confession shows a remarkable development on the teaching of the former Confession, and reveals that in the space of twelve months Calvin has had a marked influence on Farel in his conception of the Lord's Supper.

We shall now examine this document more closely.

It begins with significant words.

"The spiritual life which Christ bestows upon us, consists not merely in this, that He vivifies us by His Spirit, but that by the power of his Spirit, He also makes us to partake of His life-giving flesh (*suae carnis vivificae*), by which participation, we are fed unto everlasting life."

In this introduction there is no special reference to the Lord's Supper, but to that perpetual, living union of the Christian with Christ, which is commonly designated the mystical union. The mystical union is referred to when it is said that "Christ feeds us for our everlasting life." Christ feeds our souls to new life, as earthly food nourishes the natural body. Calvin thinks of the "state of faith" as a new life, as the existence of a new creature in us. An idea, of which we find traces in Zwingli, is here found in richly developed form.

In the *Institutes*, book iii. sections 18 and 19, Calvin has clearly stated that the imputation of the merit of the death of Christ does not rest on an abstract juridical act, but on a real, living union with Christ. Christ has won our atonement, and it is imparted to us, in that He is born again in us, *i.e.*, through the presence of a *new life* in our souls. But in these words of the Confession, the nature of this mystical union is more clearly defined on *two sides*. The Lutheran theologians defined this mystical union as a mere taking part in the *spirit* of Christ, or merely in His divine nature. They affirmed a communion with the Humanity and the glorified body of Christ only during the moment of partaking of the Supper. This Confession takes a deeper view of the mystical union. It is free from that dualism which speaks of a continuous, spiritual communion and a momentary, bodily communion. It gives a higher conception both of the general, continuous, mystical union and of the communion with Christ in the act of the Supper. It regards it as a communion with Christ

according to His Humanity, and it also regards it, not as outward, but inward. It thus defines that general, mystical union on *two sides*.¹

On the one side, it consists not only in this, that He vivifies us by His Spirit, but He makes us partakers of His life-giving flesh.

On the other side, He makes us partakers of His flesh by the power of His Spirit. (*Non in eo duntaxat sita est, quod spiritu suo nos vivificet, sed quod etiam suae vivificae carnis nos facit participes . . . carnis suae vivificae spiritus sui virtute nos facit participes.*) The Holy Spirit alone does not enter into us, while Christ remains outside us. Nor does Christ enter into us without the agency of His Holy Spirit. The union with Christ is a real union. He communicates His whole being to us with all His spiritual and psychical powers, and penetrates with His sanctifying influences our whole being, spirit, soul, and body. But it is an *inner* union. The body of Christ, as physical substance, is not bound with the substance of our body, in this way communicating Christ's spiritual and psychical power to us. But the Holy Spirit who has made Christ to be born in us perfects continually this further appropriation of Christ, *i.e.*, He brings not indirectly through the illumination of our thoughts, but directly through His divine power, Christ really into us. The act of union of Christ with us is thus not an act of local descent, but an almighty act which is outside all categories of space, and can only be comprehended under the category of eternity. It is not a question of mechanical commingling, but of organic birth and growth.

The divine-human power of Christ enters into the centre of our spiritual and psychical life (not into our thoughts, and still less into our bodies). In this way we are united with the whole Christ. Calvin always thinks of the *life* as the centre, the true centre of man.² So long as one does not rise to the idea of this life as the union of spirituality and corporeality, so long as one regards the true essence of man either spiritually as his thought-world, or materially as his

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 427. Henry, *op. cit.* i. Appendix

² Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 428.

body, so long will one fail to understand Calvin. Both elements, the reality and centrality of the mystical union, or, as Calvin expresses it, the communion of believers with Christ, are now thoroughly developed.

"When, therefore, we speak of the communion which believers have with Christ, we mean that they communicate with His flesh and blood not less than with His Spirit, so as to possess thus the whole Christ."

This is said to be clearly according to Scripture, and it is added, "Nor is it a small or common thing that the Apostle teaches, when he asserts that we are flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of His bones, but He so designates the admirable mystery of our communion with His body, which no one may adequately describe in words."¹

This is a clear statement of the reality of the communion of the whole man with the whole Christ.

There is no hesitation or equivocation here. The mystical union receives complete expression.

All this, it is next said, requires no local presence.

"For the efficacy of His Spirit is not so limited by any bounds but that He can truly join into one, things that are locally disjoined. We acknowledge accordingly, that His Spirit is the bond of our participation in Him."

That is not to say that the Spirit simply flows here from Christ in an outward way, leaving His proper life behind, but so "that He feeds us truly with the *substance* of the Lord's flesh and blood unto immortality, and vivifies us by their participation."¹

Here we see quite clearly that when Calvin, in the *First Edition of the Institutes*, denied that we receive the substance of the body of Christ, he was using the word in the sense of material substance.

Here he maintains the receiving of the real substance of the body of Christ, taking the word substance in the deeper sense. The real sense in which he understood the word has been made clear from what he has already said. To him the substantial essence of the glorified body consists in power (*virtus*). One also sees that when Calvin names the Holy Ghost as the Agent who effects the union between the believer and Christ, he does not mean that the Holy

¹ Henry, *op. cit.* Appendix I.

Ghost increases our subjective faith, and thereby increases and promotes our spiritual and moral harmony with Christ. He teaches quite plainly that the Holy Ghost, through a wonderful act of His everlasting and almighty power, unites us really with the objective Christ, and implants Him as a vital power in us. He says that this is a mystery which no human tongue can explain.

After the Confession has thus spoken of the continuous union which begins with the new birth, it next speaks of the connection of the Holy Supper to this continuous union.¹

"This communion of His flesh and blood, Christ offers and presents in His Holy Supper under the symbols of bread and wine to all who rightly celebrate it." Here the objective force of the Sacrament is recognised in full. The Holy Supper is an act in which Christ "offers and presents" that communion.

It is thus, *firstly*, not merely a commemoration of the death of Christ for us, nor of the life of Christ in us.

It is, *secondly*, not merely a pledge that Christ has died for us.

But, *thirdly*, it is an act in which there is a real renewing and promoting of that continuous, living union. It is a real act on the part of Christ.² Along with the outward service proceeds an inward divine mystery, of which the outward is to be regarded as a symbol and pledge. It is not the bread that brings Christ or contains Him. It is Christ Himself Who through His Holy Spirit gives Himself to us. Bread and wine are symbols. That is to say, bread and wine show that Christ is the food of the new man. But in the Holy Supper they are also pledges, for Christ gives Himself under the symbols of the bread and wine (*sub panis et vini symbolis*). The previous assertion of the inwardness of the communion prevents us understanding the "sub" in the Lutheran sense of a local presence, and the "offers and presents" makes this also clear.

About the conditions for the receiving of Christ, the Confession is silent. The debated point about the partaking of Him by unbelievers is avoided. A better solution is

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 430.

² Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 431.

offered, in that the ambiguous "unworthy" is replaced by a new expression, "Who celebrate it in the right way."

When the Confession uses the words, "Who celebrate it in the right way," it makes *two* statements.

1st. It asserts that the communion does not depend on the strength of our subjective faith, but that everyone, however weak be his faith, partakes of the Sacrament and receives Christ, when he communicates according to the instruction and institution of Christ.

2nd. It asserts that frivolous mockers who do not celebrate the Sacrament in the right way (*juxta legitimum institutum*) do not receive Christ.

This Confession is exceedingly important. It was presented to a Synod of the Helvetic Church (September, 1537), fully alive on all sides to the bearing and force of its several positions, and by no means disposed to fall blindly into Luther's arms. Megander had great influence in Bern, and just at this time no small amount of prejudice was roused by the negotiations connected with the Wittenberg Concordia. Bucer and Capito found it necessary to attend the Synod in their own defence. The subject led to great discussion. Such, however, was the prevailing tendency that in the end the scale turned even in Bern in favour of Bucer's view. Megander felt himself defeated. He had written a Catechism, in which the Lord's Supper was said to be a mere memorial of Christ's death. This the Synod ordered to be changed, and another section, composed by Bucer, was substituted for this part. "The epidemic of Bucerism," it was said by Megander and his friends, "spread daily more and more."¹ The Genevan Divines stood openly, of course, on the same ground. Bucer and Capito subscribed their Eucharistic Confession, and it became, in fact, an official act of union between the Strasbourgers and the Swiss. The authorship of this Confession has been a matter of debate. It was presented by Farel, Viret, and Calvin. We do not claim that Calvin was solely and entirely responsible for its production. From our knowledge, however, of his subsequent teaching, we can confidently assert that it expressed his views.

In twelve years (1525-1537) the state of the Zwinglian and

¹ Hundeshagen, *op. cit.* p. 91. Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 433.

the Lutheran parties had greatly changed. In 1525 Zwingli did not plainly deny the mystical union in the Lord's Supper. He only resisted the outward communication which Luther maintained. He allowed himself to be led into a one-sided emphasising of the relation of the Sacrament to the death of Christ. In 1525 Luther would not have been satisfied with a mere confession of a mystical union. Founding on his exegesis, he demanded an acceptance of the local presence of Christ in the bread, and of the oral manducation. Now at the September Synod (1537), twelve years later, the names "Lutheran" and "Zwinglian" had quite a different meaning. The so-called "Zwinglianism" of Megander and his colleagues denoted a denial of the mystical union with Christ. It was thus possible for Calvin, who was a "Zwinglian" in the older sense, to come forward as an opponent of the new "Zwinglianism" of Megander. This is very important for a proper comprehension of Calvin's relation to Zwingli's doctrine.

When we understand the connection of the older with the newer "Zwinglianism," we recognise why Calvin was at that time reckoned as an opponent of Zwingli, yet afterwards was held by the Reformed Church to be akin to him in doctrine. Calvin was akin to Zwingli in his more positive periods.

"The original 'Zwinglianism' of Zwingli," says Ebrard, "stands in the same relationism to the 'Zwinglianism' propounded at the September Synod, as the original Jewish Christianity stood to the later Ebionitism."¹

Megander and his associates were like Westphal and his followers in later times. Westphal was accused by Calvin of "Lutheran idolatry," and Megander and his school worshipped Zwingli in the same blind way, and refused to advance beyond what they considered to be his clear and definite teaching. But at the September Synod (1537) the word "Lutheran" had also a different signification. All who went beyond the mere relating of the Sacrament to the death of Christ, and who accepted the mystical union, were now regarded as Lutheran. Calvin was thus reckoned as a Lutheran in Switzerland at this time. Very soon he

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 433.

was accepted in Germany also as a Lutheran. Ebrard contrasts the relative position of the parties in 1525 and 1537 by the following table.¹

	1525	1537
The Lord's Supper related to the death of Christ.	In Germ. } Zwinglian.	Zwinglian.
Central living union.		Developed by Calvin Luther. } Lutheran.
Outward (<i>peripherische</i>) living union.	Lutheran.	

CALVIN'S EXPULSION FROM GENEVA

The *Articles*, the *Catechism*, and the *Confession of Faith* were the measures taken by Farel and Calvin to reform the manners and morals of the city of Geneva, and to establish a theocracy according to the teaching of the Old Testament.² The Genevans had taken Moses for their guide.³ Professor Choisy considers that all would have been well had they found a broader basis. They failed, in that they had regard only to the Old Testament, and paid insufficient heed to the new law of love and liberty in Christ.⁴ According to the same authority, Calvin claimed too great powers for the Consistory, and Geneva was not ready to accept his lofty moral code.⁵ The citizens submitted, but only temporarily, to the demands of the Reformers. Many of the most influential people had never sworn to the Confession, and the impossibility of enforcing the law brought the Church into contempt. It is not the purpose of this work to detail the events which led to the expulsion of the Reformers from Geneva. It is sufficient to relate that the sentence of banishment was pronounced on May 26th, 1538.

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 433.

² Heyer, *op. cit.* p. 4.

³ Borgeaud, *op. cit.* p. 41.

⁴ Lectures (Geneva), July, 1925.

⁵ *La Théocratie à Genève*, pp. 9-19.

CHAPTER XI

CALVIN IN STRASBOURG . . . TEACHING ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

Calvin's Relation to the Church of the Augsburg Confession—Melancthon's *Variata* (1540) of the Augsburg Confession—Calvin's Tract, *De Coena*—Evaluation of the Tract—Second Edition of the Institutes (1539); the French Translation (1541); The Second Catechism (1541). . . . Their teaching on the Lord's Supper—Summing up of Calvin's teaching on the Lord's Supper at this time.

FAREL now returned to his former congregation in Neufchatel, while Calvin repaired to Strasbourg in September, 1538. He was received with open arms by Bucer and Capito, and was appointed Professor of Theology at a moderate salary. He gathered around him a congregation of French exiles, and put into practice his cherished views on discipline and order. He soon felt at home, and was regarded as a Lutheran theologian of the school of Bucer. That does not mean that he was a supporter of Luther's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, for Calvin wrote at Strasbourg the *Second Edition of the Institutes* and the *Second Catechism*. He was rather a theologian and minister of the Church of the Augsburg Confession. As delegate of the Strasbourg Church he attended the Conference at Frankfurt, the Colloquies at Hagenau and Worms, and the Interimsverhandlung at Ratisbon.¹

When Brenz, who wrote the Syngamma, came to Basel, he addressed him as "My dearest Calvin." At Ratisbon he was designated by Melancthon as "The Theologian par Excellence," on account of the subtlety of his arguments against transubstantiation.²

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 536 f.

² Henry, *op. cit.* i. p. 367. Schaff. *Swiss Ref.* i. p. 380.

It has always been a debated question how Calvin could have conscientiously accepted the Augsburg Confession. Hengstenberg has said in Harless' *Zeitschrift für Prot. und Kirche* (1884), "No Reformer, if he wished to remain true to the Confession of his Church, could sign the Augsburg Confession."¹ But here there is a confusion of terms. In the year 1541 there were no Lutheran or Reformed Churches in the later sense. But there was a Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Empire, and other Churches; for example, the Zwinglian Church in Zurich. It was the Westphal Controversy and the Concordia Formula which led to the new designation of Reformed or Calvinist. In 1541 there was no such separation or distinction. Bucer and Capito were openly accepted as adherents of the Augsburg Confession, and the variations of their views from the official documents were well known. This is explained by the fact that even in the original edition of 1530, as we have seen,² there was no mention of the point of difference between Luther's and the Bucer-Melanchthon-Calvin teaching. The presence in the Supper, but not the presence in the bread was taught. It is also quite possible that it was not the original edition of 1530, known as the *Invariata*, but the new edition of 1540, the *Variata*, which Calvin subscribed. This *Variata* contains certain modifications reflecting Melanchthon's change of view.

"Concerning the Lord's Supper, they teach, that with the bread and wine, are truly exhibited the body and blood of Christ to those who eat in the Lord's Supper."

We find that in this new form the clauses on the real presence and the disapproval of dissenting views are omitted, and the word *exhibeantur* is substituted for *distribuuntur*. In other words, the Article is so changed that even Zwingli could have given it his hearty approval.

In 1557, Calvin writes to Schalling, "Nor do I repudiate the Augsburg Confession, which I willingly subscribed, in the sense in which the author himself interpreted it."³

We have already noted Melanchthon's development in view effected through his intercourse with Oekolampadius.

¹ Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, p. 241. ² This work, p. 97.

³ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 451, note. Schaff, *Swiss Reform*, ii. p. 377, note.

But Calvin, too, had conversations with Melanchthon on the subject of the Supper. He met him first at the Frankfort Colloquy (February, 1539), and even before that he had asked him if there was anything in his teaching with which he could find fault. But Melanchthon assured him that he was at one with him.

Calvin writes,¹ "I had sent him several propositions, from which he might discover if there was any difference between us. Ere he answered my enquiries, we met each other at Frankfort, and he proved to me that his meaning was no other than that which my words expressed." In a letter to Farel (March, 1539), Calvin further writes, "Melanchthon assents to our doctrine without exception, but confesses that there are those who desire something stronger . . . and that he has for long been viewed with suspicion because they see that he has somewhat wavered in his opinions. He does not believe that an actual union can be accomplished, yet he anxiously desires that the present agreement may be retained. So far as he is concerned, do not doubt but that he thinks as we do."

When we consider all the circumstances, we fail to see why it should have been considered as inconsistent that Calvin should have put his signature to the Augsburg Confession.

And now, in the new writings which he produced at Strasbourg, we find that there is very little change of viewpoint, and that Melanchthon has had no transforming influence upon him. On the other hand, we cannot claim that Calvin has had any influence on Melanchthon, since both came independently to the same doctrine, and both rejoiced to find the other in himself.

Under the very eyes of Luther this Calvin-Melanchthon teaching spread more and more. We cannot say that Luther agreed with it, but he certainly did not oppose it openly. The standpoint of this work is that Calvin was not originally a mediator. He has been designated by Bohatec as the "Theologian of the diagonal"² but this is not a true description. He brought his doctrine independently from France, when he was neither in touch with the Swiss nor German teaching. What he has given us in the *First*

¹ Henry, *op. cit.* i. p. 155 f.

² Bohatec, *Calvin-Studien. Elberfeld* (1909), p. 392.

Edition of the Institutes and in his early works was written to make his position clear in regard to the Roman Catholic Church, from which he had so recently severed himself. Nothing is more unhistorical than to say that his original teaching on the Lord's Supper was a synthesis of Swiss and German elements. Quite the contrary is true. His exposition of this question is independent and original, and it had to justify itself to both opposing camps. It was only when he got to know the situation better and had studied the points of disagreement that he began to realise that there was much of essential truth in the testimonies both of Luther and of Zwingli. It was then he imposed upon himself the task of mediation. Constituted as he was, he could not refuse this high vocation. "For," as Stähelin says, "whoever is conscious of possessing the power and the means of bringing an unhappy quarrel to an end . . . ought not and cannot refrain from using that means and exercising that power."¹ One could not expect any other line of action from a man like Calvin, who had the unity of the Church so much at heart.

DE COENA DOMINI

It was in this spirit that he brought out his *De Coena Domini* at Strasbourg in 1540. He published it "to restore quiet to the numerous pious souls, whom the late disputes had so confused, that they knew not where to look." It forms an epoch in his life, because he now appeared for the first time as a mediator, hoping to restore peace to the disturbed communities, and in this way to lay a foundation for the unity of the several parties in the Church of the Reformation.

This "golden treatise"² is a model of order and arrangement.

Calvin deals with the Lord's Supper under five heads.³

1st. For what End our Lord instituted this Holy Sacrament.

2nd. What Fruit and Utility we receive from it.

3rd. What is the legitimate Use of it.

¹ Stähelin, *op. cit.* i. p. 212.

² Beza, *Life of Calvin*, p. 36.

³ *Tracts*, ii. p. 164.

4th. The Errors and Superstitions with which it has been contaminated.

5th. The Source of the recent discussions and disputes on this question.

In the *first* section he touches on the point in debate between Zwingli and Luther, and sets forth clearly the relative functions of the Word and the Sacrament in the nurture of the believing soul.

"God," he says, "having received us in baptism into a spiritual life, the food He provides to preserve and strengthen us, must be spiritual also. For we should understand, that not only has He called us to possess one day His heavenly inheritance, but by hope, He has already, in some measure, installed us in possession. Not only has He promised us *life*, but already has regenerated us through the seeds of immortality in His Word." But the life that has thus been originated in us must be continually nourished. How can this be effected? Not by perishable food, for what would such food avail the soul? God feeds us by a spiritual bread—His Word, through which he has regenerated us. For in this Word is Jesus Christ offered and given for our appropriation. Christ is the true Soul-Food. Through none other can our inner man be nourished. To Him alone we are directed. He is the Bread and Water of life. But what now is said of the Word is also true of the Sacrament of the Supper. Christ is here also communicated to us through the Word. He has added the Sacrament to the Word, because we are so weak and faint-hearted that we cannot receive it by faith, however much it is preached to us. God the Father has thus condescended to us, and has given us a visible sign, by which He represents the substance of His promises (paras. 3, 4, 5).

The Purposes and Ends of the Lord's Supper are then said to be three.

1st. To sign and seal on our consciences the promise contained in the Gospel concerning our being made partakers of His body and His blood.

2nd. To exercise us in recognising His great goodness towards us.

3rd. To exhort us to all holiness, unity, and brotherly charity.

The Second Section deals with the Fruit and Utility of the Lord's Supper.

Here Calvin builds on evangelical foundations. He reminds us of our lost condition and sinful state. "We are all full of sin and iniquity. None can escape eternal death. If we are not stupefied, this horrible thought must be a kind of hell to vex and to torment us." And all this leads to the perfect Saviour, the Risen and Crucified Redeemer, Who communicates Himself to us in the Supper. We need the crucified Lord to deliver us from our sins. We need the Risen Jesus to free us from the destruction of death, and to make us partakers of the heavenly immortality (para. 8). We find here the mediating work of Calvin at its best.

Here he combines the great truth in Zwingli's testimony with the outstanding thought of Luther. Zwingli had always related the Supper to the death of Christ, and His historic work. Luther had always emphasised the real communion with the Person of Christ.

Calvin now combines these elements organically. He proceeds from the Johannine truth, that the merit of the work of Christ can only be appropriated through a real personal union with Him.

"This is the singular consolation we receive in the Supper, that it leads us to the Cross of Christ, and to His resurrection, to certify us that whatever iniquity there may be in us, the Lord nevertheless recognises and accepts us as righteous. But as the blessings of Christ do not belong to us at all, unless He be previously ours, it is necessary first of all, that He be given to us in the Supper" (paras. 9-11).

He therefore calls Christ the substance of the Sacrament.

The graces and blessings attained through Him, he calls the efficacy of the Sacrament.

On the other hand, the substance and the efficacy are in no way to be disjoined. Hence he concludes that *two* things are presented to us in the Supper.

1st. Jesus Christ as the Source and Substance of all good.

2nd. The Fruit and the Efficacy of His Death and Passion.

Here we find Calvin, for the first time, building his teaching on an exegetical basis, on the words of the Institution of the Supper.

"For, after commanding us to eat His body and drink His blood, He adds that His body was delivered for us, and His blood was shed for the remission of sins. Hereby He intimates—

1st. That we ought not simply to communicate in His body and blood as an empty form, but in order to receive the fruit derived to us from His Death and Passion.

2nd. That we can attain the enjoyment of such fruit only by participating in His body and blood, from which it is derived" (para. 11).

He means to say that in the Supper it is not a question of a formal, external union with Christ's body as an end in itself.

The communion with Christ has as its end and purpose the appropriation of the merits of Christ. He infers from the words of Institution that we have to do with the body of Jesus broken and given for us.

In this way he founds on Zwingli's exegesis.

And now, again, as in the Institutes of 1536, it is the soul, not the mind or understanding, which receives Christ.

"As our life is in Christ, so are our souls nourished with food convenient for them" (para. 13).

That now leads Calvin to the question, "so much debated both anciently, and at the present time, How are we to understand the words in which the bread is called the body of Christ, and the wine His blood?"

"That may be disposed of without difficulty," he answers, "if we carefully observe the principle which I lately laid down, viz., that all the benefit which we should seek in the Supper is annihilated, if Jesus Christ be not there given to us, as the substance and foundation of all" (para. 12).

In no case are we to deny that a true communication of Jesus Christ is presented to us in the Supper, for that would be to render the Sacrament frivolous and useless, "an execrable blasphemy, unfit to be listened to."

"And, moreover, if the reason for communicating with Jesus Christ is to have part and portion in all the graces which He purchased for us by His death, the thing requisite must be, not only to participate in His Spirit, but also to be partakers in His Humanity, in which He rendered all

obedience to His Father, in order to satisfy our debts, although, properly speaking, the one cannot be separated from the other, for when He gives himself to us, it is in order that we may possess Him entirely. Hence, as it is said that His Spirit is our Life, so He Himself, with His own lips, declares that His flesh is meat indeed, and His blood is drink indeed (John vi. 55).

"If these words are not to go for nothing, it follows that, in order to have our life in Christ, our souls must feed on His body and blood as their proper food. This, then, is expressly attested in the Supper, when of the bread, it is said to us that we are to take it and eat it, and that it is His body, and of the cup, that we are to drink it, and that it is His blood. This is expressly spoken of the body and blood, in order that we may learn to seek there the substance of our spiritual life" (para. 13).

If now the further question be asked, How are flesh and blood related to the bread and wine? Calvin answers—

"Bread and wine are the visible signs which represent to us the body and blood" (para. 14).

They are called body and blood because they are, as it were, instruments, by which the Lord distributes them to us. They are signs, but not doctrinal signs, not merely symbols for the thinking mind, but signs which assure us of the accompanying presence of the things they represent. They are signs of the presence, as the dove was a sign, that the Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus.

"We have a very fair parallel in an analogous case. When the Lord was pleased to manifest His Spirit at Christ's baptism, He represented it under the figure of a dove. John the Baptist, narrating the event, says that he saw the Holy Ghost descending. If we look at it clearly, we will perceive that he saw nothing but the dove, for the essence of the Holy Spirit is invisible. As he knew, however, that the vision was no vain show, but the most sure sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit, he hesitates not to say that he saw it (John i. 32), because it was represented to him, according to his capacity. Thus it is with the communion which we have in the body and blood of the Lord Jesus. It is a spiritual mystery which can neither be seen by the eye nor comprehended by the understanding.

It is, therefore, figured to us by visible signs, according as our weakness requires, in such manner, nevertheless, that it is not a bare figure, but is combined with the reality and substance. It is with good reason that the bread is called body, since it not only *represents*, but also *presents* it to us " (paras. 14 and 15).

As a brief definition of the *Utility* of the Supper, Calvin gives us, " Jesus Christ is there offered to us that we may possess Him, and in Him, all the fulness of grace, which we can desire, and that herein, we have a good aid to confirm our consciences in the faith which we ought to have in Him " (para. 17).

That is all that Calvin considers it judicious to say at this point regarding the question. He enters into less summary explanations in his *Institutes* and *Polemical Treatises*.

At the close of the *Second Section* he touches upon *two* further benefits of the Supper, in that it incites us to Gratitude and Praise for all that we have received in Christ. A *third* or practical benefit is also this, that it is a most powerful incentive to holy living and to charity and brotherly love. " For seeing that we have been made members of Jesus Christ, it is most reasonable that we should become conformable to Him in purity and innocence, and especially that we should cultivate charity and concord together as becomes members of the same body. And inasmuch as the virtue of the Holy Spirit is conjoined with the Sacraments, when we duly receive them, we have reason to hope that they will prove a good means and aid to make us advance and grow in the holiness of life, and especially in charity " (paras. 18 and 19).

This leads naturally to the *third* point proposed at the beginning of the Tract, viz., the *legitimate use of the Lord's Supper*. This consists in reverently observing our Lord's Institution. In order that we may receive it worthily, we must approach it worthily. In order to take the pure into ourselves, we must have purified ourselves. But as there is no one of us perfectly pure, but many weak in faith and defective in life, God comes to our help in the Holy Sacrament. A penitent and trustful disposition is necessary on our part, in order that we may receive the Sacrament with blessing. " Nay, if we were not weak, subject to distrust

and an imperfect life, the Sacrament would be of no use to us. It would have been superfluous to institute it. Seeing, then, it is a remedy which God has given us to help our weakness, to strengthen our faith, the use becomes the more necessary the more we feel pressed by the disease. For if we allege as an excuse for not coming to the Sacrament that we are still weak in faith or integrity of life, it is as if a man were to excuse himself from taking medicine because he was sick."

As to the *times of using the Supper*, Calvin now adverts to the propriety of frequent Communion. He, however, lays down no fixed rule here. He would not constrain all Christians to use a specified day. On the other hand, if we duly consider the End which our Lord has in view, we shall perceive that the use should be more frequent than many make it. For the more infirmity presses, the more necessary it is frequently to have recourse to what may, and will, serve to confirm our faith, and advance us in purity of life. In every well-ordered Church the Supper should be celebrated frequently, so far as the capacity of the people will admit, and each individual in his own place should prepare himself to receive it, whenever it is administered in the holy Assembly, provided there is not some great impediment which constrains him to abstain (20 to 29).

Calvin considers that a great number of the excuses which people make for abstaining are groundless and frivolous.

"Some say that they are unworthy to appear at the Lord's Table, but thereby they acknowledge it is presumption for unworthy Christians to invoke God in prayer." They should rather try to remove the hindrances which the devil throws in their way (30).

Others pretend that they cannot communicate with unprepared persons, but St. Paul does not command us to examine others, but each to examine himself. It is not the office of each individual to judge and discern, to admit or to debar whom he pleases. This prerogative belongs to all the Church in general, or rather to the pastor, with the elders (31).

Others think that it is superfluous to use the Sacrament

frequently, because if we have once received Jesus Christ, there is no occasion to return so often to receive Him.

This excuse has no semblance of plausibility. The spiritual bread is not given us to eat our fill of it all at once, but rather that, having had some taste of its sweetness, we may long for it the more, and use it, when it is offered to us. So long as we remain in this mortal life, Jesus Christ is never communicated to us in such a way as to satiate our souls, but wills to be our constant nourishment (32).

Section IV. refers to *Popish doctrines and errors*, but, as we shall be dealing with Calvin's attitude to Rome in the *Institutes* of 1559, we proceed to the concluding paragraphs of the tract which deal with the *Recent Disputes on the Supper*. Here Calvin reveals a real desire for adjustment and settlement of the "devil inspired contentions" (55). He shows in what respects both sides have failed, and on what points they must come nearer to each other. It is Stähelin who says, "It is a rare model of a mild and critical review of this flaming quarrel."¹ "First, I beseech all believers in the name of God, not to be too much scandalised at the great differences which have arisen amongst those who ought to be leaders in bringing back the light of Truth. For it is indeed no new thing for the Lord to leave His servants in some degree of ignorance, and suffer them to have debate among themselves—not to leave them for ever, but to humble them." (54). "When Luther began to teach, he took a view of the subject which seemed to imply, that in regard to the corporal presence in the Supper, he was willing to leave the generally accepted opinion untouched; for while condemning transubstantiation, he said that the bread was the body of Christ, inasmuch as it was united with Him. Besides, he added similitudes which were somewhat harsh and rude; but he was in a manner compelled to do so, as he could not otherwise explain his meaning. For it is difficult to give an explanation of so high a matter without using some impropriety of language" (55). "On the other hand arose Zwingli and Oekolampadius, who, considering the abuse and deceit which the Devil had employed in establishing such a carnal presence of Christ, as had been taught and held for

¹ Stähelin, *op. cit.* i. p. 216.

more than six hundred years, thought it unlawful to disguise their sentiments, since that view implied an execrable idolatry, in that Jesus Christ was worshipped as enclosed in the bread. Now as it was very difficult to remove this opinion, which had been so long rooted in the hearts of men, they applied all their talents to bring it into discredit, showing how gross an error it was not to recognise what is so clearly declared in Scripture regarding the Ascension of Jesus Christ, that He had been received in His Humanity into Heaven, and will remain there until He descend to earth to judge the world. Meanwhile, while engrossed with this point, they forgot to show what presence of Christ ought to be believed in the Supper (56). Luther thought that they meant to leave nothing but the bare signs without their spiritual substance. Accordingly, he began to resist them to the face, and call them heretics. After the contention was once begun, it got more inflamed with time, and has thus continued for the space of fifteen years or so, without the parties ever listening to each other in a peaceful temper." (57). "We thus see wherein Luther failed on his side, and Zwingli and Oekolampadius on theirs. It was Luther's duty to have given notice that it was not his intention to establish such a local presence as the Papists dream. He should have abstained from these similitudes so harsh and difficult to conceive. On the contrary, with his accustomed violence, he used hyperbolical forms of speech. The other party also offended in that they laboured rather to pull down what was evil, than to build up what was good, for though they did not deny the truth, they did not teach it as clearly as they ought to have done. I maintain that in their too great anxiety to hold that the bread and wine were called the body and blood of Christ, because they are signs of them, they did not attend to add, that though they are signs, the reality is conjoined with them, and thus protest, that they had no intention whatever to obscure the true communion which the Lord gives us in His body and blood by this Sacrament" (58). And Calvin concludes, "Let us not lose sight of our duty, which is not to forget the gifts which the Lord bestowed on us, and the blessings which He has distributed to us by their hands. For if we are not ungrateful for all we owe to them, we shall

be able to pardon that and much more, without blaming them. In short, we ought always to judge and speak of them with modesty and even with reverence (59). And further, we all then confess with one mouth that in receiving the Sacrament in faith, according to the ordinance of the Lord, we are truly made partakers of the proper substance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. How that is done, some may deduce better and explain more clearly than others. . . . Meanwhile it should satisfy us that there is fraternity among the Churches, and that all agree in so far as it is necessary for meeting together according to the commandment of God" (60).

"If Protestantism had had the irenical sentiments of Calvin," says Doumergue, "Rome would have perished. It is more than certain that Calvin would not have spoken thus, if Zwingli and Oekolampadius had held the opinions which are usually ascribed to them, if they had denied the real and spiritual presence in the sense that Calvin understood it."¹ Henry remarks how Bossuet gives great attention to this little tract of Calvin.²

Luther's attitude to the same work was entirely favourable. We have proof of this in Pezel's *Erzählung vom Sakramentstreit*.³ "The book of Calvin translated into Latin by Des Gallars had been printed in 1545, and brought to Wittenberg. On 13th April, Dr. Luther, having finished his lecture, betook himself to the book-shop of Moritz Goltzsch, who showed him Calvin's little work on the Lord's Supper. Dr. Luther, seating himself, read the book with particular interest, and at last said, 'Certainly a learned and pious man! I could have entrusted the whole matter of this debate to him. For my part, I consider that if the opposite party had not made so much of it, we could have come to an agreement. If Zwingli and Oekolampadius had expressed themselves thus at the beginning, we should not have had so long dispute.'" Hospinian, in his *Historiae Sacramentariae*,⁴ relates the same anecdote. Henry⁵

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 355.

² Henry, *op. cit.* i. p. 177. Bossuet, *Histoire des variations*, Paris Edition, ix. p. 25.

³ Pezel, *Erzählung vom Sakramentstreit*, p. 137 f. See this work, p. 233.

⁴ Hospinian, *Hist. Sacr.* p. 329.

⁵ Henry, *op. cit.* ii. p. 302.

regards it as "having all the external and internal signs of truth." Koestlin says that it is credible,¹ and Doumergue reproduces it as well as Ebrard.² The *De Coena* was an irenical work, which did not profess to go deeply into any question, but rather to examine if no common formula could be found in which Luther and Zwingli could unite.

The *Second Edition of the Institutes* was published at Strasbourg in 1539. This Edition professes to furnish an introduction to the Bible, and a summary of what it is necessary to know concerning salvation. Calvin apologises for the delay in the appearance of this book. "During the last two years," he says, "God has been exercising me in a strange manner." We have already spoken of these years. In them, as Doumergue remarks, "Calvin has refreshed his knowledge and experience."³ In the new Edition, many additional topics are touched upon, and the simplicity and clarity of the earlier work is lost. This defect, however, is remedied in the French translation which was made in 1541. Here the material is arranged much more articulately and orderly.

This French translation of 1541 appeared in the same year as the *Second Catechism*. In teaching they are practically identical, and it would be tedious to treat each separately. In both, the place and work of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament is exhaustively described. In the opinion of Wernle,⁴ this aspect had received insufficient attention in the Edition of 1536. In the section, *De Sacramentis* in the Catechism, the operation of the Holy Spirit in its relation to the operation of the Sacraments is admirably defined. All dualism is excluded.

We begin our discussion with *Question Three*—"Seeing it is the proper office of the Holy Spirit to seal the promises of God upon our minds, how do you attribute this to the Sacraments?"

Answer—"There is a wide difference between Him and them. To move and affect the heart, to enlighten the mind, to render the conscience tranquil, truly belongs to the Spirit alone; so that it ought to be regarded as wholly His work, and be ascribed to Him alone, that no other may

¹ Koestlin, *op. cit.* ii. p. 572.

² Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 475.

³ Doumergue, *op. cit.* iv. p. 4.

⁴ Wernle, *op. cit.* p. 113.

have the praise. But this does not at all prevent God from employing as secondary instruments the Sacraments, and applying them to what use He deems proper, without derogating in any respect from the agency of the Spirit. From this, it follows that the power and efficacy of the Sacraments is not contained in the outward element, but flows entirely from the Spirit of God" (Tracts ii. p. 84).

According to Calvin, the truth is not that in general cases the Holy Spirit unites us to Christ, in that He brings Christ into our thoughts, and that in exceptional cases Christ gives His body and blood orally without the intervention of the Holy Spirit, by means of bread and wine. Bread and wine are not used as substitutionary organs which can effect a more real communion than the Holy Spirit. That is not Calvin's view.

This is rather what he means. There is One Mediator between us and Christ, only One who can effect the creation of the new man in us, and that is God, the Holy Spirit. A creature is not able to transform us into new creatures. The Holy Spirit effects that Christ is really born in us. He effects that intimate, continuous, living union with Christ, which begins at the new birth and continues through our Christian course. Outside this, there is no second. Also in the Sacraments, there is only one. But there is a *twofold* kind of secondary means which the Holy Spirit uses in order to effect that living union between the believer and Christ. These are, *firstly*, the *spiritual* organs of Preaching and the Word, and, *secondly*, the *material* organs of the Sacraments.

"If we were wholly spiritual, we might, like the angels, spiritually behold Him and His grace, but as we are surrounded with this body of clay, and subject to all the weaknesses of mortal flesh," the Holy Spirit makes use of the material organs of the Sacraments for the inducing and strengthening of this mystical union. And yet the activity of the Spirit is not so related to the working of these secondary organs that it is suspended, or that both activities are merged into one. The material organs (the signs in the Sacrament) are pledges and seals of a simultaneous dynamic activity of the Holy Spirit in the soul.

It is not the bread which brings Christ. It is not upon the bread that we must gaze, as if that dead creature

had the immanent power to bring us Christ. Christ gives Himself to us through His Holy Spirit, and the bread is a pledge and seal which raises the certainty of this mystical union far above all the vacillations of our subjective faith.

Ebrard supplies a table which makes the above exposition clear and plain.¹

The Truth is *not* that Christ

Communicates Himself	Communicates Himself in
outside the Sacraments	the Sacraments through out-
through the Holy Spirit to	ward signs to our body.
our thoughts.	

The Truth *is* that Christ

Communicates Himself to us Mystically through the Holy Spirit.

Outside the Sacraments,	In the Sacraments, so that
so that the subjective per-	we obtain objective cer-
ception of His objective	tainty of His objective com-
communication overcomes	munication through visible
many vacillations.	signs, with whose reception
	the mystical communication
	of Christ is bound.

In the *French Edition of the Institutes* (1541) we have similar teaching. The Holy Spirit is there described as the bond of connection (*lien de cette union*) between the believer and Christ's body which is at the right hand of God. The Spirit unites us to Him, and is a kind of channel by which everything that Christ has and is, is derived to us.

"For if we see that the sun is shining, and sending forth its rays upon the earth to generate, cherish and invigorate its offspring, in a manner transfuses its substance into us and it, why should the radiance of the Spirit be less in conveying to us the communion of His flesh and blood? Wherefore the Scripture, when it speaks of our participation in Christ, refers its whole efficacy to the Spirit.

Paul, in Romans viii. 9-11, shows that the only way in which Christ dwells in us is by His Spirit. By this, however, he does not take away that communion of flesh

¹ *Tracts*, ii. p. 84. Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 456.

and blood of which we now speak, but shows that it is owing to the Spirit that we possess Christ wholly." ¹

This is but an echo of the Catechism. It is the Holy Spirit that is the one bond of union. There is no need to bring the body of Christ from heaven and to confine it in the bread.

"I mean that we are not to cleave to the visible signs so as to seek salvation from them, or to imagine that the power of conferring grace is either fixed, or included in them, but rather that the sign is to be used as a help, by which, when seeking salvation and complete felicity, we are pointed directly to Christ." ²

If we now consider the section of the Catechism which deals particularly with the *Lord's Supper*, we find this definition of its meaning.

"It was instituted by Christ, in order that by the communication of His body and blood, He might teach and assure us that our souls are being trained (*educari*) in the hope of eternal life " (Tracts ii. p. 89).

This statement clearly teaches that the communion is an inward, mystical communion. It is a matter for our souls (*animas*). The Supper gives a symbolical display (*doceret*), and seals to us its certainty (*certum redderet*).

In the following question it is taught that Christ is the living bread and food of the inner man. "Why is the body of our Lord figured by bread, and His blood by wine?" "We are hence taught that such virtue as bread has in nourishing our bodies, the same has the body of our Lord spiritually to nourish our souls," and the merit of Christ's death can be appropriated to us only through this living union.

"For, as our whole reliance (*fiducia*) for salvation depends on Him, in order that the obedience which He yielded to the Father may be imputed to us, just as if it were ours, it is necessary that He be possessed by us; for the only way in which He communicates His blessings to us, is by making Himself ours."

"But did He not give Himself to us, when He exposed Himself to death, that He might redeem us from the sen-

¹ *Institutes of* 1541, p. 637.

² *Catechism of* 1539. *Tracts*, ii. p. 85.

tence of death, and reconcile us to God? That is indeed true, but it is not enough for us unless we now receive Him, that thus the efficacy and fruit of His death may reach us."

This living union does not consist in subjective faith, but, in that Christ really lives in us.

"But does not the manner of receiving consist in faith? I admit it does, but I at the same time add, that this is done when we not only believe that He died in order to free us from death, and was raised up that He might purchase life for us, but recognise that he dwells in us, and that we are united to Him by a bond the same in kind as that which unites the members to the head, that by virtue of this union, we may become partakers of all His blessings" (Tracts ii. p. 90).

This living union does not pertain merely in the moment of communicating in the Supper, but always. In the Supper it is confirmed and increased (*confirmatur et augetur*), "for, although Christ is exhibited to us in baptism and in the Gospel, we do not receive Him entire, but in part only" (Tracts ii. p. 90).

The synchronism and the connection of the act of increased communion with Christ with the act of reception of the signs is now touched upon.

"What then have we in the symbol of bread? As the body of Christ was once sacrificed for us to reconcile us with God, so now also is it given to us, that we may certainly know that reconciliation belongs to us" (Tracts ii. p. 90).

"What in the symbol of the wine? That as Christ once shed His blood for the satisfaction of our sins, and as the price of our redemption, so He now also gives it to us to drink, that we may feel the benefit which should thence accrue to us."

After refuting the teaching that the Mass is a sacrifice, it is shown that Christ gives Himself under *two* signs—the bread and the wine.

"Therein the Lord consulted our weakness, teaching us in a more familiar manner that He is not only food for our souls, but drink also, so that we are not to seek any part of our spiritual life anywhere else than in Him alone" (Tracts ii. p. 91).

The Catechism strongly disapproves the Denial of the

cup to the laity, and then proceeds to discuss whether in the Supper only a figure of the benefits is presented.

"Have we in the Supper only a figure of the benefits mentioned, or are they there exhibited to us in reality?"

The answer is: "Seeing that our Lord Jesus Christ is truth itself, there cannot be a doubt that He Himself at the same time fulfils the promise which He there gives us, and adds the reality to the figures. Wherefore, I doubt not that as He testifies by words and signs, so He also makes us partakers of His substance, that thus we may have our life in Him" (Tracts, ii. p. 91).

Here, as always, Calvin uses the word "substance," not in a material sense, but in the sense of "energy" or "power."

He now repeats the statements with which we are already familiar.

1st. It is not the bread that brings Christ to us, but the Holy Spirit. The bread is but a sign and seal of a simultaneous activity. "*Actus in actu*," Ebrard¹ designates it, "*non extensum in extenso*."

2nd. The manner of Christ's communication is *supra-spatial*, and thus His ascension and the circumscription of His body does not hinder in any way the reality of the mystical union. Both these statements are enshrined in the following question and answer. "But how can this be, when the body of Christ is in Heaven, and we are still pilgrims on the earth?" "This He accomplishes by the secret and miraculous agency of His Spirit, to Whom it is not difficult to unite things otherwise disjoined by a distant space" (Tracts ii. p. 91).

The following question denies the local inclusion of the body.

It is then again repeated that there are two things in the Supper, viz., a heavenly and invisible thing, and an earthly and visible thing, and that Christ feeds us for the resurrection of the body. "The resurrection is there also confirmed to us by a kind of pledge, since the body also shares in the symbol of life" (Tracts, ii. p. 92).

The teaching of the Three Strasbourg Writings, *De Coena Domini* (1540), Second Institutes (1539 and 1541), and the

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 459. *Tracts*, ii. p. 90, *passim*.

Second Catechism (1541), are only a logical development and a detailed exposition of the view presented at the September Synod at Bern (1537). That developed view may be summed up in a series of propositions.

1st. The Christian life is represented as consisting always in the form of a mystical union with Christ, accomplished by the Spirit, through the soul or central principle of our twofold life, but extending from this into the whole man.

2nd. In the Lord's Supper this communion, always only partial in our present state, is confirmed and increased.

3rd. The bread and wine are symbols with no power apart from the action of the Spirit, but along with them is offered really and truly the life-giving virtue of Christ's flesh and blood.

4th. They are not merely significative, but also exhibitive signs, making us partakers of the substance of Christ's life.

5th. By substance is meant not matter in any sense, but the virtue and active energy of which Christ's glorified body consists.

6th. All is a mystery transcending the categories of space and time.

7th. The wonderful and hidden power of Christ's Spirit binds together things which are otherwise locally far apart.

8th. The believer must look not to the bread and wine as such, but to Christ in heaven (not, however, in the sense of reaching Him only by subjective thought and feeling, and still less in the sense of a real local ascent of the soul to His presence) in such a way as to expect from Him superlocally, and not from the local signs in any material mode, the objective grace of the Holy Sacrament.

9th. This objective grace is a true participation in the very substance of Christ, effected through the wonderful power of the Holy Ghost.

These propositions ¹ define Calvin's teaching in the years 1539-1541, and they are only the organic development of his testimony during the years 1537-1539. Calvin was not a Zwinglian (in the narrow sense), who in Germany pretended to be a Lutheran. He was still less a Lutheran, who after his return to Switzerland fell away from Luther-

¹ *Mercersburg Review*, September, 1850.

'anism and accepted a feigned Zwinglianism. He was neither a Zwinglian nor a Lutheran, but always, and in all periods of his life, he preached the same doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and at all times with great openness. He differed from Zwingli in his middle period, in that he explained that in the Holy Supper there is a real communication of Christ's vivific power to believers—a real communion with Christ.

He differed from Luther in that he maintained with equal emphasis the centrality, illocality, and continuity of the mystical union, and that it was effected by the Holy Spirit. He differed from him also in that he regarded bread and wine as pledges of an accompanying strengthening of the mystical union with Christ already existing. This was the teaching which Calvin expressed openly in Germany, where he was reckoned as a Lutheran Theologian. He did not borrow this teaching from Bucer and Melanchthon. He brought it with him into Germany. But, as we have seen, Melanchthon soon found himself in almost complete agreement with him.¹

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 463.

CHAPTER XII

CALVIN'S SECOND SOJOURN IN GENEVA . . . THE CONSENSUS TIGURINUS

Letter to Sadolet—Events leading up to Calvin's Recall to Geneva—Return to Geneva, 12th September, 1541—*Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques* on the Lord's Supper—Negotiations leading up to the Consensus Tigurinus—Letter of Calvin to Bullinger on the Lord's Supper—Bullinger's Reply to Calvin—The Twenty Articles of Bern—The Twenty-Six Articles of the Consensus Tigurinus—The Predestinarian Teaching in the Consensus Tigurinus—Attitude of other Churches to the Consensus Tigurinus.

CALVIN spent three happy years in Strasbourg, but he did not forget Geneva. He proved his interest in her welfare in many ways. He rendered a most conspicuous service to her by his Letter to Sadolet (September, 1539).

"An evil of a dangerous kind arose in the year 1539, and was at once extinguished by the diligence of Calvin," says Beza.¹

"The Bishop of Carpentras at that time was James Sadolet, a man of great eloquence, which he perverted in suppressing the truth of light. Observing his opportunity in the circumstances which had occurred in Geneva, and thinking that he would ensnare the flock, when deprived of its distinguished pastors, he sent a letter to the people of Geneva, omitting nothing which might tend to bring them back into the lap of Rome. There was nobody at that time in Geneva capable of writing an answer, but Calvin, having read it in Strasbourg, forgot all his injuries and forthwith answered it with so much truth and eloquence, that Sadolet immediately gave up the whole affair as desperate." This is Beza's account of the important and interesting controversy which occurred in the German period of Calvin's

¹.Beza, *Life of Calvin*, p. 67.

life, and left a permanent impression on history. This *Answer to Sadolet* was one of the means of saving Geneva from Popery, and led indirectly to his return to the city. But there were other reasons which demanded his recall. Internal disturbances followed his expulsion, and brought the little Republic to the brink of ruin. Calvin had predicted a short régime for his enemies, and he was right, for in less than a year they were demoralised and split up into factions. "There is no place in the world," he wrote to Viret, "where I am more afraid, not because I hate it, but because I feel unequal to the difficulties which await me there."¹ He was not mistaken in his fears, for his subsequent life was an unbroken struggle. We need not wonder then that he refused call after call, and requested Farel and Viret to desist from their efforts to lure him away from Strasbourg.² The return to Geneva, however, appeared to be inevitable. The Council and the people were convinced that Calvin alone could save the city. His recall was first seriously discussed in 1539, and finally decided upon on 12th September, 1540.³ A year later, after much searching of heart, he arrived at Geneva, 12th September, 1541.⁴ On the following day he appeared before the Syndics and the Council in the Town Hall. He made no demand for the punishment of his enemies, but asked for the appointment of a commission to prepare a written order of Church government and discipline. The Council complied with his request, and resolved to retain him permanently, and to inform the Senate of Strasbourg of this intention.

On 26th September the Commission presented the *Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques* to the Small Council. This Council objected to the monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper, and recommended its celebration only four times a year. Calvin yielded his better judgment in consideration of the weakness of the times. With this modification the Small Council adopted the constitution on October 27th.⁵ The citizens accepted it on 20th November, 1541.

¹ Herminjard, vii. p. 43.

² Dyer, *op. cit.* p. 121.

³ *Registres du Conseil.*

⁴ Heyer, *op. cit.* p. 6.

⁵ *Registres du Conseil*, October 27th.

This was a great victory, for the *Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques* laid a solid foundation for a well regulated and evangelical Church.¹ We are only concerned here with these Articles in so far as they denote the extreme importance which Calvin at that time and all throughout his life placed on the *doctrine and celebration of the Lord's Supper*.

THE PERTINENT ARTICLES ARE:²

Article 53. Since our Lord instituted the Supper for frequent celebration, and as it was thus observed in the ancient Church, until the devil overturned everything, requiring the Mass in place of it, this too infrequent celebration is a fault which ought to be corrected. However, in the meantime, we have advised and ordained that it be administered four times a year, viz., Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and the first Sunday of September.

Article 54. The ministers should distribute the bread orderly and reverently, and no one should give the cup save those appointed, or the deacons with the ministers, and for this reason, there should not be too many vessels.

Article 55. The tables should be near the pulpit, in order that the minister be convenient for the tables.

Article 56. It should only be celebrated in the Church until a better opportunity.

Article 57. On the previous Sunday intimation should be made, so that no young person may come before having made profession of faith, conformant to the Catechism. Strangers and newcomers should also be exhorted to present themselves first at the Church in order to receive instruction, so that no one may approach to his condemnation.

There now ensued for Calvin a period of great activity and usefulness. This activity was not limited to the narrow bounds of the little Geneva State. He had a care for the larger interests of Christ's kingdom. He conducted an extensive correspondence, and for seven years (1542-1549) he was engaged in the most delicate negotiations for

¹ Schaff, *Swiss Ref.* ii. p. 445.

² Heyer, *op. cit.* p. 270. *Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques*, ex. MSS. Tom. x. part i. p. 15.

the framing of the Consensus Tigurinus. We have already seen in the Tract, *De Coena*, that he had a great desire to subdue the violence of hostile parties. It was in conformity with this feeling that he now promoted by all the means in his power the Zurich Consensus. This was the first step towards the accomplishment of his greater plan. Calvin, agreeing almost entirely with Melanchthon, had been favourably regarded by Luther. The outbreak of the latter in the Kurzes Bekenntnis in 1544 was of mere private concern, and had no dogmatic importance. Calvin could, therefore, reasonably entertain the hope, after Luther's death in 1546, that with the help of Melanchthon he might mediate successfully between Germany and Switzerland on the question of the Lord's Supper. Had this actually been accomplished, the Church would have formed one great harmonious whole, and Calvin would have repaired what Luther's violence had marred. But as an essential to this union the Swiss must have confessed the real, spiritual, substantial presence of Christ in the Sacrament. Most of them had indeed adopted this doctrine, but they refrained from openly confessing it. Great diversity of opinion, however, prevailed in the Church of Bern. Viret was involved in a dispute with Sulzer, and there was a conflict between the old, one-sided, abstract view of the understanding and the more concrete view of Calvin. Both he and Viret were accused at Zurich of having, according to report, dissented from the Swiss Confession, and inclined to Lutheranism, but the contrary was seen to be the case when Farel and Calvin visited Zurich in 1548. They worked unceasingly to calm the spirit of controversy which had arisen among individuals.

Calvin had rightly felt that he must unite with Bullinger, who had succeeded Zwingli in Zurich. He was a man of great influence and sound learning, and with him Calvin conducted a correspondence of much interest to the subject of this work. Calvin realised that he was engaged in an undertaking of great difficulty, as he well knew the obstinacy of the Zurichers.¹

This is made evident in a letter written to Viret in April, 1548.² He there complains that the Zurichers were

¹ Dyer, *op. cit.* p. 247.

² Herminjard, p. 458.

so perverse that they were ready to admit the most slanderous reports. The difficulties which he had to encounter will be seen by some extracts which we will give from the letters which he wrote at this period.

In the following letter he seeks to win Bullinger by gentle words.

"We are anxious to come to a friendly understanding with you. It is no mere theatrical affair that we propose. I say nothing about Farel, whose mind, as you know, shrinks with disgust from every kind of ostentation. But we are anxious to discuss with you in a friendly way those points with regard to which we are most nearly at one. And this were indeed the best method of procedure among brethren, and one we should have found profitable, unless I am greatly deceived."¹

And now there follows a condensed statement of the manner in which Christ is present in the ordinance of His appointment.²

"For with regard to the Sacraments in general, we neither bind up the grace of God with them nor transfer to them the work or power of the Holy Spirit, nor constitute them the ground of the assurance of salvation. We expressly declare that it is God alone, Who acts by means of the Sacraments, and we maintain that their whole efficacy is due to the Holy Spirit, and testify that the action appears only in the elect. Nor do we teach that the Sacrament is of profit, otherwise than as it leads us by the hand to Christ, that we may seek in Him whatever blessings there are. I do not see indeed what you can properly desire as wanting in this doctrine, which teaches that salvation is to be sought from Christ alone, makes God its sole author, and asserts that it is accepted only through the secret working of the Spirit. We teach, however, that the Sacraments are instruments of the grace of God, for, as they were instituted in view of a certain end, we refuse to allow that they have no proper use. We therefore say, that what is represented in them, is exhibited to the elect, lest it should be supposed that God deludes the eyes by a fallacious representation. . . . When the signs of the flesh and blood

¹ Bonnet, *Letters of Calvin*, ii. p. 155.

² Reyburn, *Life of Calvin*, p. 222.

of Christ are spread before us in the Supper, we say that they are not spread before us in vain, but that the thing is also manifested to us, whence it follows that we eat the body, and drink the blood of Christ. By so partaking, we neither make the sign the thing, nor confound both in one, nor enclose the body of Christ in the bread, nor on the other hand, imagine it to be infinite, nor dream of a carnal transfusion of Christ into us, nor lay down any other fiction of that sort. You maintain that Christ, according to His human nature, is in heaven. We also propose the same doctrine. The word 'heaven' implies with you distance of space. We also readily adopt that opinion, that Christ is undoubtedly distant from us by an interval of space.

"You deny that the body of Christ is infinite, but hold that it is contained within its circumference. We candidly give an unhesitating assent to that view, and raise a public testimony on behalf of it. You refuse to allow the sign to be confounded with the thing. We are sedulous in admonishing that the one should be distinguished from the other. You strongly condemn Impanation. We subscribe to your decision. What then is the sum of our doctrine? It is this, that when we discern here on earth the bread and wine, our minds must be raised to heaven, in order to enjoy Christ, and that Christ is here present with us, while we seek Him above the elements of the world. For it is not permitted us to charge Christ with imposition, and that would be the case, unless we held that the reality is exhibited with the sign, and you also concede that the sign is by no means empty. It only remains that we define what it contains within it. When we briefly reply, that we are made partakers of the flesh and blood of Christ, that He may dwell in us, and we in Him, and in this way, enjoy all his benefits, what is there, I ask, in these words, either absurd or obscure, especially as we, in express terms, exclude whatever delirious fancies occur to the mind?"¹

Bullinger still continued to complain of some of Calvin's expressions.

On 6th December he writes,² "I reply to your propositions, not in order to impugn them, but to give you an

¹ Bonnet, *op. cit.* ii. p. 156.

² Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 497.

opportunity of throwing further light upon them, if by any means, it may be given to us to think and speak alike." There was as yet, we see, no question of his approving Calvin's teaching. Bullinger simply wanted information as to what exactly Calvin meant. Calvin replied, 21st June, 1549, and complained of his obstinate distrust. "I have read your annotations, from which I have discovered what you regard as wanting in my belief. I have endeavoured briefly to satisfy you, because the matter itself does not demand a long discourse. . . . I observe that you are perplexed in regard to many points which present difficulty, simply because you put upon the majority of my statements a different construction from what you have any ground for doing. A preconceived opinion regarding me leads you to imagine and attribute to me what never occurred to my mind."¹

In this correspondence we see that Calvin was thoroughly occupied with the thought of reconciling the Swiss by a method of his own. They had been violently separated from communion with the German Protestants by Luther's rough and intolerant treatment, and were thus driven to a greater one-sidedness of opinion. Calvin hoped to correct this by the inculcation of higher views, which should not only stretch far above their one-sidedness, but bring into clearer display the truth, held partially by both.²

Everything seemed to promise peace when the year 1549 commenced.

A Synod was held at Bern on 19th March, and the Genevese sent a letter to the meeting. Calvin employed this opportunity to win the Bernese by words of reconciliation, and thus to lay the foundation of union on the question of the Sacrament. "That we offer, uncalled for, a statement of our views on the Sacraments, requires some brief apology, though no particular preface can be needed in addressing you on so important a subject. Since your illustrious Senate has called on you to deliberate regarding the peace of the Church, it is probable there will be some discussion regarding the Sacraments, as that subject has for a long time occupied the attention of the Bernese Church. Though no exposition of the doctrine therefore has been asked of

¹ Bonnet, *op. cit.* ii. p. 196.

² Henry, *op. cit.* ii. p. 79.

us, we have yet considered it our duty to state what we will with one mouth confess." ¹ Twenty articles follow. ²

It was Calvin's main design in these to show that the Sacraments ought by no means to be regarded as empty signs. He was anxious to give new life to the cold Megandrian doctrine of the Swiss, and to make them all see that they could not properly persevere in holding this opinion, but ought rather to reconsider it, as he himself had done. These Articles form the *basis of the Consensus Tigurinus*, and their teaching is in harmony with Calvin's Strasbourg testimony, as exemplified in the *De Coena* and the Catechism. ³

We have no information as to how Calvin's Articles were received at the Synod of Bern. Viret expresses himself as only generally satisfied with the results. But after the Synod Calvin undertook further negotiations with Bullinger at Zurich. ⁴ He did not wish, Bucerwise, to draw up an ambiguous formula. What he tried to do was to convince Bullinger of the truth of his doctrine. Before this, he had only succeeded in convincing him that he was not a Lutheran, and that he acknowledged the true moments in Zwingli's teaching, viz., the opposition to the corporal presence, the oral communication, and the idolising (*Vergötterung*) of the earthly elements. He had not got any further than that. The points of difference between him and Zwingli (as Calvin conceived his teaching) had remained as points of difference between him and Bullinger. A second meeting and conversation was absolutely necessary if an understanding was to be effected. But the time was not propitious for a journey to Zurich; Calvin was put out of sorts by Bullinger's mistrust of him. He was occupied by party strife and division in Geneva, and he had no intention of listening to Farel's earnest exhortation to him to go to Zurich. ⁵

Then unexpectedly a friendly invitation came from Bullinger. He asked him for a meeting and an interview. Calvin was delighted and wrote to him, "I am desirous of telling you that I have scarcely ever received anything more

¹ Bonnet, *op. cit.* ii. p. 80.

² Henry, *op. cit.* ii., Appendix.

³ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 498.

⁴ Hundeshagen, *op. cit.* p. 246.

⁵ Hundeshagen, *op. cit.* p. 247 f.

pleasant from you ; for I am very glad that hardly anything—or at least very little—hinders us from agreeing even in words.”¹

Two days later he had set out for Zurich. Farel accompanied him. “By prudence and love,” Farel had said, “we shall conquer.” And he was not deceived. The Conference of the ministers continued several days, and the well known formula was drawn up, which all the Helvetic and Rhaetian Churches, with those of the Grisons subscribed, and by which Bullinger and Calvin and the Churches of Geneva and Zurich were united in the strictest alliance. It is of supreme importance for the subject of this work, and we now proceed to its discussion.

Some of the Articles are general and uncontroversial, and we pass them over without comment.

In the first Six Articles the Consensus speaks generally of our salvation in Christ, but in Article VII. it proceeds to a particular discussion of the Sacraments.

Article VII.—*The Ends of the Sacraments* (Tracts, ii. p. 214).

“The ends of the Sacraments are to be marks and badges of Christian profession and fellowship or fraternity, to be incitements to gratitude, and exercises to faith and a godly life ; in short, to be contracts binding us to this. But among other ends, the principal one is, that God may by means of them, attest, represent and seal His grace in us. For although they signify nothing else than is announced to us by the Word itself, yet it is a great matter, *firstly*,

“That there are submitted to our eye, as it were, living images which make a deeper impression on the senses, by bringing the object in a manner directly before them, while they bring the death of Christ and all His benefits directly to our remembrance, that faith may be better exercised ; and, *secondly*,

“That what the mouth of God had announced is confirmed and ratified by seals ” (Tracts, ii. p. 214).

This Article, amongst others of the Consensus, has often been quoted as proof that Calvin was here making concessions to Megandrianism. Dr. Hodge, who does not himself rise above this latter view, sees in Calvin's doctrine a

¹ Bonnet, *op. cit.* ii. p. 211.

conflict between a lower and a higher thought, and in this Article he seeks confirmation of this thesis.¹ We do not think that this contention is supported by the facts. Our opinion is that Article VII. is a clear expression of the difference between the view of Megander and Calvin's higher thought. Even to Megander the Sacraments are *tesserae professionis*, *tesserae fraternitatis*, exhortations to thankfulness. The Consensus admits that they are all this in a secondary way, but that in their *essence* they are seals of the divine activity of grace. And when we speak of seals, we have to remember that in the phraseology of Calvin's age, sealing had the sense of "authentication of what is present mystically in the sacramental transaction." It is not that the Sacraments contain another new, second kind of activity of grace, different from what takes place outside them. In them, there is the same continuous, mystical, personal, living union with Christ, in which all our subjective life of faith finds its objective ground and its end. There is the same reckoning of the righteousness of Christ, the same bestowal of sanctifying forces, which are the fruits of that objective, living union. But these graces are imparted in a *new* way in the Sacraments. The Sacraments have a double meaning—a doctrinal meaning as Symbols, and an attesting meaning as Seals. This was well brought out by Melancthon's *docent et testantur*. As symbols, they display the object of faith before the mind in clear pictures. As pledges, they seal and confirm to us the real, actual, objective reception of these divine things. Schenkel is also of opinion, like Hodge, that Calvin here ascribes to the Sacraments no objective power. "Calvin here is driven to refer the efficacy of the Sacraments to subjective faith, and to deprive them of objective force."² That this is not the case is clearly shown in the *Exposition of the Consensus Tigurinus* which was written shortly afterwards. When speaking of Luther, Calvin says, "I am aware how many hyperbolical things fell from him in debate; but whenever he wished to make his cause appear most plausible to pious and upright judges, what did he profess to be the ground of controversy?"

¹ *Mercersburg Review*, September, 1850. Hodge, *op. cit.* iii. p. 649.

² Schenkel, *Wesen des Protestantismus*, i. p. 428.

"*Firstly*, that he could not bear that the Sacraments should be regarded merely as external marks of profession, and not also as badges and symbols of divine grace.

"*Secondly*, that he held it an indignity to compare them to void and empty pictures, while God truly testifies in them what he figures, and, at the same time, by His secret agency, performs and fulfils what He testifies."

Calvin acknowledges this as the true moment in Luther's teaching. Then he says of the German Theologians, "If they use it candidly, and not merely to tickle the ears of the simple, surely when they hear us confess on the one hand, that the Sacraments are neither empty figures nor mere external badges of piety, but seals of the divine promises, testimonies of spiritual grace to cherish and confirm faith, and on the other, that they are instruments by which God acts effectually in His elect; that, therefore, although they are signs distinct from the things signified, they are neither disjoined nor separated from them; that they are given to ratify and confirm what God has promised by His Word, and especially to seal the secret communion which we have with Him; there certainly remains no reason why they should mark us in their list of enemies. While, as I lately mentioned, they are constantly exclaiming that they have no other purpose than to maintain the doctrine that God uses the Sacraments as helps to foster and increase faith, that the promises of eternal salvation are engraven on them to offer them to our consciences, and that the signs are not devoid of the things, as God conjoins the effectual working of His Spirit with them; then all this being granted, what, I ask, prevents them from freely giving us their hand?" (Tracts, ii. p. 224 f.).

He now refers to the *Augsburg Confession*. "And to make it unnecessary to turn up and examine the private writings of each, readers will find in our *Agreement* everything contained in the Confession, published at Ratisbon, and called the *Confession of Augsburg*,¹ provided only that it be not interpreted as having been composed under fear of torture, to gain favour with the Papists. The words are 'In the Holy Supper, the body and blood of Christ are

¹ Another proof that it was the *Variata* that Calvin signed.

truly given with the bread and wine.' Far be it from us to take away the reality from the sacred symbol of the Supper, or to deprive pious souls of so great a benefit. We say, that lest the bread and wine should deceive our senses, the true effect is conjoined with the external figure, so that believers receive the body and blood of Christ." We now go back to the Articles of the Consensus, and we find the same teaching stated clearly in detail.

Article VIII.—*Gratitude* (Tracts, ii. p. 214).

"Now seeing that these things which the Lord has given as testimonies and seals of His grace are true, He undoubtedly truly performs inwardly by His Spirit that which the Sacraments figure to our eyes and other senses. In other words, we obtain possession of Christ, as the Fountain of all blessings, both in order that we may be reconciled to God by means of His death, be renewed by His Spirit to holiness of life, in short, obtain righteousness and salvation; and also in order that we may give thanks for the blessings which were once exhibited on the Cross, and which we daily receive by faith."

We see from this that to Calvin all depends on the invisible side of the transaction. The elements are *inanes larvæ* (Tracts, ii. p. 215), separately considered, but still the Sacraments are organs by which God works "efficaciously," where it seems good. Most plainly, the Consensus Tigurinus understands by "signs; seals; fruition of Christ," etc., something mystical and deep. It is not only a question of "mental processes," as Hodge and Schenkel would have it.

Article IX.—*The signs and the things signified are not disjoined, but distinct.*

"Wherefore, though we distinguish, as we ought, between the signs and the things signified, yet we do not disjoin the reality from the signs, but acknowledge that all who in faith embrace the promises there offered, spiritually receive Christ with His spiritual gifts, while those who had long been made partakers of Christ, continue and renew that communion."

There can be no clearer statement than this, that in the Sacrament there is a new enhancing or increasing of living fellowship with Christ. Before this it was said that there

is bound with the outward act a real objective act of divine activity or operation.

In the following four Articles it is shown that a divine power is not to be ascribed to the earthly elements as such, but that the association of a divine activity with the outward act has its ground in the promise. God conjoins that divine activity always and contemporaneously with the outward activity.

Article X.—*The promise principally to be looked at in the Sacraments* (Tracts, ii. p. 215).

“And it is proper to look not to the bare signs, but rather to the promise annexed thereto. *As far therefore as* our faith in the promise there offered prevails, *so far* will that virtue and efficacy of which we speak display itself. Thus the substance of water, bread and wine, by no means offers Christ to us, nor makes us capable of his spiritual gifts. The promise rather is to be looked to, whose office it is to lead us to Christ by the direct way of faith—faith which makes us partakers of Christ.”

What Calvin means is clear. He means to say that the force of the Sacrament resides in the promise. But what he *does* say is ambiguous. It almost appears as if our subjective faith were made to be the agent that brings Christ to us, *i.e.*, as if Christ were brought to us by an act of faith on our part. This seems to be borne out by the “as far as . . . so far,” and “makes us partakers.” And yet he can hardly have meant that, as he said clearly in the *Expositio* (Tracts, ii. p. 230), “For we hence infer, that acts of which the Son of God is the author, over which He presides, in which, as with outstretched hand from heaven, He displays His virtue, are no acts of man.” The explanation of the ambiguity, according to Ebrard, is to be found in the introduction of predestinarian teaching into the Consensus. “It is in the free and sovereign determination of God to give the profitable use of the signs to whom He pleases” (Tracts, ii. p. 231). “It was that that led him astray. But far from ascribing to the subjective action of man too much, he ascribes to it too little. Far from making a human act of faith the operating agency in the Sacrament, the condition for the reception of Christ in the Sacrament, he refers it directly to an absolute and irresistible act of God.” This

mingling of predestinarian doctrine with the doctrine of the Supper is considered by Ebrard to be a blemish on Calvin's teaching—"the only blemish it had."¹

The next five Articles are general in nature, and raise no controversial point. They bear the undernoted titles:

Article XI.—We are not to stand gazing on the elements (Tracts, ii. p. 215).

Article XII.—The Sacraments effect nothing by themselves.

Article XIII.—God uses the instrument, but all the virtue is His.

Article XIV.—The whole accomplished by Christ.

Article XV.—How the Sacraments confirm.

The following three Articles teach the necessity of a state of faith and election as the conditions of receiving Christ.

Article XVI.—*All who partake of the Sacraments do not partake of the reality* (Tracts, ii. p. 217).

"Besides, we carefully teach that God does not exert His power indiscriminately in all who receive the Sacraments, but only in the elect. For as He enlightens unto faith none but those whom He has foreordained unto life, so by the secret agency of His spirit, He makes the elect receive what the Sacraments offer."

Article XVII.—*The Sacraments do not confer grace.*

"By this doctrine is overthrown the fiction of the Sophists, which teaches that the Sacraments confer grace on all who do not interpose the obstacle of mortal sin. For, besides that in the Sacraments, nothing is received except by faith, we must also hold that the grace of God is by no means so annexed to them that whoso receives the signs, also gains possession of the thing. For the signs are administered alike to elect and reprobate, but the reality reaches the former only."

Article XVIII.—*The gifts offered to all, but received by believers only.*

"It is true that Christ with His gifts is offered to all in common, and that the unbelief of men, not overthrowing the truth of God, the Sacraments always retain their efficacy; but all are not capable of receiving Christ and His gifts. Wherefore nothing is changed on the part of God,

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 510.

but in regard to man, each receives *according to the measure of his faith.*"

These last three Articles are often taken as an indication that Calvin in this Consensus accommodated his views to suit the Swiss. We certainly have a feeling that they do not express the full content of that teaching with which we have now come to associate his name, but it can hardly be said that there is any indication of an accommodation of view. As regards the supposed point of difference with Bullinger, Calvin did not yield an iota. That the earthly elements have no efficacy in themselves and by their own force, but are seals of a concurring operation from Christ, Calvin had taught years before at Strasbourg. In the Consensus Tigurinus, he does not seem to have made the least approach to the Megandrian view. What he did in the negotiations was to acquire a new respect for Bullinger, the head of the so-called Zwinglian Church. He had, two years before, had nothing but hard words for the Zurich doctrine, but he now saw, in intercourse with Bullinger, that it had something true for its object. He saw that as the truth on Luther's side was opposition to "empty figures," so the truth in Bullinger's doctrine was the opposition to the deification of creaturely signs. This truth, however, he had not now adopted for the first time. He had always possessed it in his own doctrine. "That he was led then to make concessions to the so-called Zwinglianism of Bullinger in any way is a pure chimera."¹ And yet, as we have said, we have a feeling that we have not quite the same teaching in the Consensus as in the previous works of Calvin. Is this due to a *mingling of the doctrine of predestination* with the doctrine of the Supper? Schaff² speaks of the "disturbing predestinarian restriction of the Sacramental grace to the elect" in the Consensus, and there can be no doubt that it emphasises this side of Calvinism. It is well known that Zwingli also gave prominence to God's sovereign election as the primary source of salvation. He and Calvin were at one in this. Bullinger,³ on the other hand, did not go so far as Calvin and

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 513.

² Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, p. 472-3.

³ Schaff, *Swiss Reform.* i. p. 210.

Zwingli. He kept within the infralapsarian scheme. Melancthon declared to Lavater that in reading the Consensus he for the first time came to understand the Swiss, but he erased these passages of the Consensus which made the efficacy of the Sacrament depend on election. It is hardly necessary to state that Calvin made the eternal election of God the article of the standing or the falling Church, and the source of strength in the battle of life. In the *First Edition of the Institutes* predestination is stated in a very simple form. Only the bright side of the doctrine, namely, the eternal election by the free grace of God in Christ is emphasised. The dark mystery of reprobation and preterition is left out. At this early stage Calvin gives the light without the darkness.¹ The fuller development of his view on predestination dates from his sojourn in Strasbourg, where he wrote his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans and the Second Edition of the Institutes. The ninth chapter of Romans is the rock on which he builds his doctrine of reprobation. About this time, when the Consensus Tigurinus was being negotiated, Calvin's mind was greatly exercised by this doctrine. His polemical writings against Bolsec and Pighius appeared in 1543-1551, and the Consensus Genevensis in 1552. It is not surprising, then, that we should find this moment emphasised in his sacramental theory, as defined in the Consensus Tigurinus of 1549. Ebrard, who fully accepts the doctrine of the Consensus with the exception of the predestinarian restrictions, devotes several pages to a discussion as to how Calvin's sacramental views were coloured by his doctrine of election. He comments on Articles XVI., XVII., and XVIII. as follows:

"As in former writings on the Lord's Supper, we have here clearly and distinctly stated by Calvin,

"(a) That a divine act of communion with Christ is associated with the outward act.

"(b) That a state of faith is the condition of the subjective receiving of Christ.

"(c) That this state of faith is evoked and strengthened in us by an irresistible activity of the Holy Spirit.

¹ Schweizer, *Centraldogmen*, i. p. 150 f. Schaff, *Swiss Reform.* i. p. 235.

"From this we can infer that the faith of all who for a time had believed, and then had fallen away, was only an apparent faith, and that in this state of apparent faith, there was no real partaking of Christ.

"Calvin also came to assert a twofold operation of the Holy Spirit.

"1st. The Holy Spirit brings Christ objectively to all communicants, and offers Him to all.

"2nd. He prepares the hearts of the *elect alone*, that they may subjectively receive the Christ objectively brought to them.

"From this it follows that it is not only the *state* of faith effected through this second activity of the Holy Spirit, but also the *degree* of faith evoked in like manner (according to God's election), which becomes the measure *how far* and *how efficaciously* the communicant can take Christ to himself. In other words, the degree of union with Christ which we have in the Supper, corresponds to the degree of faith which the Holy Spirit has previously wrought in us." ¹

This is Ebrard's commentary on Articles XVI., XVII., and XVIII., and it seems to prove our contention that at least the predestinarian element was emphasised by Calvin at that time, and has a certain influence on his sacramental teaching.

Article XIX.—*Believers before, and without the use of the Sacraments communicate with Christ.*

"As the use of the Sacraments will confer nothing more on unbelievers than if they had abstained from them, nay is only destructive to them, so without their use, believers receive the reality which is figured there. Thus, the sins of Paul were washed away by baptism, though they had been previously washed away. So also baptism was the laver of regeneration to Cornelius, though he had already received the Holy Spirit. So in the Supper, Christ communicates Himself to us, though He had previously imparted Himself and perpetually remains in us. For seeing that each is enjoined to examine himself, it follows that faith is required of each before coming to the Sacrament." ("A state of faith indeed, but not a degree of faith, according to which the measure of our communion with Christ would have to be reckoned.") ¹

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 515 f.

"Faith is not without Christ; but *as far as (quatenus)* faith is strengthened and enhanced by the Sacraments, *so far* are the gifts of God conferred on us, and thus Christ in a manner grows in us, and we in Him" (*Tracts*, ii. p. 218).

Here the greater or less *degree* of our faith is made to be a co-operating factor with the Holy Spirit in effecting our union with Christ. Certainly the one factor, the objective operation of the Holy Spirit, which brings Christ to us, is not denied, but the result depends pre-eminently on the other factor—on our hold on Christ. This hold on Christ is, of course, according to Calvin, also effected by the Holy Spirit, but that still leaves us with a twofold operation of the Holy Spirit.

Article XX.—*The benefit not always received in the act of communicating.*

"The advantage which we receive from the Sacraments ought by no means to be restricted to the time at which they are administered to us, just as if the visible sign, at the moment when it is brought forward, brought the grace of God along with it. For those who were baptised when mere infants, God regenerates in childhood or adolescence, occasionally in old age. Thus the utility of baptism is open to the whole period of life, because the promise contained in it is perpetually in force. And it may sometimes happen that the use of the Supper, which, from thoughtlessness or slowness of heart, does little good at the time, afterwards bears its fruit" (*Tracts*, ii. p. 218).

It will be noted that this general expression applies to the *substance* of the Sacrament, and not merely to the *advantage* we derive from it. As such, it is a modification, if not a departure from Calvin's earlier teaching, and yet, if we consider the first twenty Articles of the Consensus, we cannot find traces of any surrender to Megandrianism. There is no lowering of the flag. There is certainly a decided prominence given to the doctrine of election in its bearing on the sacramental theory. This has led, as we have seen, to the positing of a second factor as necessary for the receiving of Christ. The first factor is still the Holy Spirit, but the *extent of our reception of Christ* is now made to depend, not on the presence of a *state of faith*, but on the *degree of faith* which we possess before the reception takes

place. This degree of faith is, of course, also mediated by the Holy Spirit. As all is referred to the Holy Spirit in the last analysis, perhaps Ebrard and others who have followed him, have laid too much emphasis on the distinction between the *state of faith* (*Glaubenszustand*) and the *degree of faith* (*Glaubensgrad*). It is sufficient, however, to state that all are agreed that we have in the Consensus Tigurinus a document which, generally considered, gives a faithful impression of Calvin's position on the Supper. It is not what we would call an accommodation of Lutheranism to Megandrianism, as has often been represented. It is rather a full development of Zwingli's somewhat negative theory during his middle period. We see that doctrine attaining to a richer fruition in the Melancthon-Calvin position, which, after all, is the position of the Reformed Church. We have seen that Melancthon welcomed the Consensus Tigurinus, and had criticism only for the Articles which he considered stressed too strongly the doctrine of election. It is also noteworthy that in all further writings Calvin omits the distinction between the *state of faith* and the *degree of faith*. This distinction does not reappear in the works against Westphal and Hesshuss, nor in the final edition of the Institutes (1559). We can therefore regard it as a temporary phase of thought, occasioned by the fact that at this time Calvin's mind was much occupied by reflections on the deep subject of eternal election and reprobation.

The last six Articles of the Consensus deal with the refutation of the *local presence*, *transubstantiation*, *ubiquity*, and the *adoration of the host*. They are interesting as revealing the common standpoint of the Swiss Churches on these important questions, but they set forth no new feature of doctrine.

ATTITUDE OF THE SWISS AND OTHER CHURCHES TO THE CONSENSUS TIGURINUS

There was great rejoicing when the Consensus Tigurinus was completed. Calvin expressed the satisfaction he felt at the influence which he knew the Consensus must exert. In a letter to Viret he writes, "The hearts of good men will

be cheered by what has taken place. Our constancy and resolution will derive new strength from it, and we shall be better able to break the power of the wicked. They who have formed an unworthy opinion of us, will see that we proposed nothing but what is good and right. Many who are still in a state of uncertainty will now know on what they ought to depend, and those in distant lands who differ from us, will soon, we hope, offer us their hand. Lastly, as it may one day happen, posterity will have a witness to our faith, which it could not have derived from parties in a state of strife. But this we must leave to God." ¹

Of Farel, Calvin frequently wrote while the negotiations were proceeding. He says, "This unwearied champion of Christianity was the originator and leader of the whole." ²

But Calvin had still many minds to tranquillise. He sought to satisfy Sulzer, the minister in Bern, and left nothing undone to induce one after another of his opponents to add their signature to the new formulary. In a letter to Farel, November 18th, 1549, ³ he showed how powerfully his persuasion had wrought with all, and characteristically, he said, "*Nostra sinceritate adducti nihil negabant.*"

"By the Formulary proposed in the Consensus Tigurinus," says Planck, "couched as it was in the strongest language, and intended to reconcile all parties, the union with the Swiss and Lutheran systems in the first and main point of dispute, was accomplished, and at last declared. It had hitherto been a matter of doubt whether the Swiss, in partaking of the Sacrament, recognised the actual presence of the body of Christ. But every kind of suspicion on the subject was now removed. The Formulary sets forth the idea of a real presence, and of an actual participation of the body of Christ in this Sacrament. But it explains at the same time the nature and manner of this presence.

According to Luther's doctrine, the body of Christ is miraculously present in the Sacrament, and brought into such union with the outward sign of the bread and wine, that it is not only received at the same time *with* these, but

¹ MSS. Geneva, September 23, 1549.

² Henry, *op. cit.* ii. p. 82.

³ MSS. Geneva, November 18, 1549.

in these and *under* these, so that it is therefore partaken of with the *mouth* by everyone who receives the sign, even though he is an unbeliever.

"According to Calvin's opinion, on the contrary, the body of Christ is not brought down into the Sacrament, but the soul of him who partakes thereof is raised by faith towards heaven, and is there brought into contact with the body of Christ, and thus made partaker of the divine life."¹

The Consensus was forwarded to the various confederate Churches, and was everywhere received with great respect.²

In October it appeared in its printed form, with a letter couched in apostolic language, written by Calvin to the Zurichers. It was a grand moment for the inner life of the Church when Melanchthon and most of the Lutheran party declared their agreement with Calvin's views, and when the French Reformed and the Swiss united themselves anew, and expressed the genuine sentiments of a true and harmonious brotherhood.

The epoch was no less noble in respect to the life of Calvin.

As the centre of the Reformed Churches, he had rendered them the most important service, and had led them by the knowledge of Scripture and brotherly kindness to truth and concord.

The Swiss sent a copy to Bucer, now in England, and he congratulated the whole Church on what had taken place.

A comparison might be drawn between the Consensus Tigurinus and the Wittenberg Concordia—not to the credit of the latter.

Luther had not the same gifts of mediation as Calvin. He began his negotiations by calling his opponents "servants of Satan," etc., and he did not succeed in leading them to a higher development of their teaching. When he did conclude the Concordia, he did it with a letter from the Swiss in his hand, clearly stating that they understood the doctrine in quite another sense.

Calvin began his work with the brotherly recognition that his opponents had elements of truth in their teaching.

¹ Planck-*Lehrbegriff*, ii. p. 236.

² Hess-*Leben Bullinger*, ii. p. 19.

His endeavour was to lead them to a further evolution of this truth, and he succeeded in establishing a unity of doctrine which was attended with the best results.

The so-called "Zwinglianism" of Zurich recognised Calvinism as its higher and natural development.

In Zwingli's first and third periods we have teaching not easy to distinguish from Calvin's riper doctrine.

Luther's zeal hindered the progress of Zwingli's thought, and the stubbornness of Megander provided the same bar to progress in the case of Zwingli's successors.

Calvin's honesty and sincerity awoke the slumbering seed, and brought the Zurichers to recognise that his doctrine was not the negation, but rather the full unfolding of their own incomplete and one-sided teaching.¹

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 524.

CHAPTER XIII

CALVIN AND WESTPHAL CONTROVERSY ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

Influence of the Consensus Tigurinus—Attitude of Melanchthon to the Consensus Tigurinus—The Anti-Melanchthon Party in Germany—Joachim Westphal—John A Lasco and his Work on the Lord's Supper—The Calvin-Westphal Writings—The points at issue in the Calvin-Westphal Controversy—The Calvin-Westphal Controversy in dialogue form—Summing up of Calvin's Teaching on the Lord's Supper in this Controversy.

THE agreement in doctrine established between the Swiss and the Genevese extended its influence to France, England, Scotland, and Holland. In the same manner, the union between Melanchthon and Calvin on the subject of the Lord's Supper secured the peace of the Protestant Church. There was every reason to expect its continuance, till Westphal, Hesshuss, and others designedly created a breach, and thus aroused the holy indignation of Calvin. What excited Calvin's anxiety was the prospect of the indescribable evils which threatened the Church through these proceedings in Germany. In the case of a man like Luther he could forgive anything, even when he most fiercely assailed the doctrine and rent the Church. But Westphal manifestly awakened the strife from an ignorant love of disputation. Calvin's main effort had ever been to establish concord between the two great parties in the Church. He had placed himself in the breach, that he might bind them together.¹

The Lutherans, since the year 1536, when the Wittenberg Concordia was established, had remained satisfied with the confession of the true bodily presence of Christ in

¹ Planck, *op. cit.* v. p. 5.

the Sacrament. They regarded particular definitions of the manner in which He is present as unnecessary. It is a mistake to regard the Church of the Augsburg Confession as at that time opposed to the Calvin-Melanchthon doctrine. This Church was broad-minded enough to include everyone within its bounds who acknowledged a real communication of Christ in the Sacrament. It had room for Luther's view of an outward communication of the body and blood, as well as for the Melanchthon-Calvin view of an act of real communion with Christ's Person. It had room for what Ebrard calls ¹ the *substantia* in *substantia* view, and for the *actus* in *actu*, for the view which held the presence *In* the bread and wine, or the view which taught the presence *With* the bread and wine. And the two views differed not only in the *How*, but also in the *What* of the Sacrament. It was not a question merely whether the body and blood of Christ are partaken of orally *In* the bread, or spiritually partaken of *With* the bread.

It was a question of *What* is communicated to us—the bodily material of the glorified body and blood, or the whole divine-human Person of Christ, whose body was once broken and whose blood was once shed.

Luther took the material view. Calvin and Melanchthon went deeper, and held that the glorified body is present according to its substance, power and energy. This difference between the strictly Lutheran and the Melanchthon-Calvin view was apparent to all, but both views were recognised, as we have said, by the Church of the Augsburg Confession. Luther declared himself as satisfied with the *Variata* edition of the Augsburg Confession of 1540. And this *Variata* was not a mere private writing of Melanchthon. It was regarded as an official document at Worms and Ratisbon. Calvin had subscribed to it as a delegate of the Church of the Augsburg Confession. It is wrong, then, to think that the *Variata* lacked official recognition. It became more and more the official view, and Luther's particular doctrine receded into the background. Many reputable theologians embraced it, as, for example, Brenz, who expressed his teaching as follows:—"The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament and a divine sign, wherein Christ

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 525.

conveys His body and blood, and assures us therewith that we have the pardon of sins and everlasting life." ¹

Whence then came the new disputes? What was it that brought to naught the higher union of thought established through Calvin and Melanchthon? Did the cause lie in Calvin's mingling of his predestinarian teaching in the *Consensus Tigurinus*? The cause of the disputes is not to be found in this connection. It had another source. It is well known that in Germany there was a school of thought which was opposed to the Philippist or Melanchthonian teaching. Its supporters were mostly followers of Flacius. The Philippists represented the humanist-biblical element, while the Flacian teaching can be characterised as dogmatic-monastic.² These two schools had already come into conflict in the Adiaphorist controversy. It was this anti-Philippist or anti-Melanchthon party which caused the new troubles and disputes. But it was not against Calvin alone, not even against the predestinarian teaching of the *Consensus*, in which he differed from Melanchthon, that these new antagonists levelled their attack. They rather directed their polemic against the points in which Calvin and Melanchthon were agreed, so that Calvin was quite justified in resisting them. The presence of Christ in the bread, ubiquity, and the partaking of unbelievers, were the three questions which the followers of Westphal regarded as all important. They so insisted on them that not only Calvinism in Switzerland, but also Melanchthon's followers in Germany were branded as unorthodox. This was the position which gave rise to the so-called Reformed and Lutheran Churches. We can distinguish two acts in the unfortunate drama. There was, *first*, Westphal's dispute with Calvin, and, *second*, the Crypto-Calvinist dispute. The first issued in the *Heidelberg Catechism* of 1563, and the second in the *Formula of Concord* of 1577.

Joachim Westphal (1510-1574), a rigid Lutheran minister who inherited the intolerance and violent temper, but none of the genius and generosity of Luther, wrote without provocation a tract against the *Consensus Tigurinus* and

¹ Hartmann and Jäger, *op. cit.* p. 21 ff.

² Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 541, *passim*.

against Calvin and Peter Martyr in 1552. He aimed indirectly at the Melanckthonians, who agreed with Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper without openly confessing it, and who for this reason are called Crypto-Calvinists. The chief points of Westphal's teaching were, as already mentioned, that the very body of Christ was in the bread substantially; that it was ubiquitous though illocal (*extra locum*); and that it was partaken of by Judas no less than by Peter. He made no distinction between Calvin and Zwingli. He treated as Sacramentarians and heretics all who denied the corporal presence, the oral manducation, and the literal eating of the body of Christ with the teeth even by unbelievers. He charged them with holding no less than twenty-eight conflicting opinions on the words of Institution, quoting extracts from Karlstadt, Zwingli, Oekolampadius, A Lasco, Bullinger, Peter Martyr, Schwenkfeld, and chiefly from Calvin.¹ As his first attack was ignored by the Swiss, he wrote another and larger tract in 1553, in which he professed to prove the Lutheran view, and urged resistance to the progress of the Calvinistic heresy.²

About the same time, in the autumn and winter of 1553, John A Lasco, a Polish nobleman, a friend of Calvin, and minister of a Reformed foreign congregation in London, fled with one hundred and seventy-five Protestants from persecution under Queen Mary, and sought shelter on Danish and German shores. He was refused even a temporary refuge in cold winter at Helsingör, Hamburg, and other ports. Westphal denounced the companions of A Lasco as "martyrs of the devil." He enraged the people against them, and gloried in the inhuman cruelty as an act of faith.³

John A. Lasco is an interesting figure in Reformation history. He was an admirer of the Swiss, and when Calvin sent him a copy of the Consensus Tigurinus, he wrote a work on the Lord's Supper, in which he approved the Consensus, and hoped that by its means all controversy would

¹ Westphal, *Farrago confusaneorum . . . de Coena Domini . . .* Magdeburg, 1552.

² Westphal, *Recta fides de Coena Domini*. Magdeburg, 1553.

³ Utenhofen, *Simplex et fidelis narratio*. Basel, 1560.

be ended.¹ This writing of A Lasco's is instructive, because he treated the subject historically, and set forth some new views.

After an introduction, in which he defines the proper Christian way to settle such disputes, he shows how the Romish doctrine was gradually evolved. According to him, there was originally ascribed to the bread and wine only the *vis significandi*, and afterwards the *vis exhibendi et continendi*. Then a union between the *signum* and the *res* was taught, and this gradually developed into a doctrine of transubstantiation. He himself calls the *res* in contrast with the *signum*, the *mysterium*, and shows how the Gospel writers are at one in asserting that in the Lord's Supper the *mysterium*, i.e., the partaking of the body and blood is added to the *signum*. Only about the *manner* of this addition is there any dispute. Some taught a presence (not local nor natural, but definitive) of the *mysterium* in the *signum*.

Some taught the union of the two by means of priestly consecration. Others taught a union of Christ with the soul through the operation of the Holy Spirit. This union—the mystery of the Lord's Supper—does not consist in an oral partaking of the body and blood of Christ. The Holy Spirit rather transports the soul of man to heaven, and Christ there bestows upon the communicant Himself, i.e., His flesh and blood, His righteousness, His saving power, and also the seed-corn of His resurrection. But the *signum* is to be found in the visible action of eating the bread and wine. A parallel instance is that of circumcision, where not the foreskin but the cutting of the foreskin is the sign. The *touto* in the words of Institution is not related to the bread, but to the transaction of the giving and receiving of the bread.

"If this exegesis was untenable," as Ebrard says, "yet we have here a clear assertion of the *actio in actione*."

From this brief statement of A Lasco's teaching, we can readily understand that Calvin would find in him a congenial spirit. He was naturally indignant at the treatment which he had received from Westphal and his friends. He

¹ John A Lasco, *Brevis et dilucida de sacramento ecclesiae Christi tractatio*. London, 1560.

felt himself in a manner called to A Lasco's defence. He had all the more justification, in that his own doctrine was assailed.

THE CALVIN-WESTPHAL WRITINGS

He took up his sharp and racy pen in three successive pamphlets. He at first wished to issue a joint remonstrance of the Swiss Churches, and sent a hasty draft to Bullinger. But Zurich, Basel, and Bern found it too severe, and refused to sign it. He corrected the draft, and published it in his own name under the title *Defence of the sound and orthodox doctrine of the Sacraments, as laid down in the Consensus Tigurinus* (Geneva, 1555). Westphal replied in a tract thrice as large, *Collectanea sententiarum Augustini de Coena Domini* (1555). In the year 1556 Calvin wrote his *Second Defence, contra Westphali calumnias*. Westphal again took up the pen in 1557, in the writing *Clarissimi viri Philippi Melancthonis sententia de coena domini*, in which he sought to prove that Calvin and Melancthon were not at one. Thereafter, in 1557 also, Calvin issued his *Ultima Admonitio ad Joachinum Westphalum*, in which it was his aim to show his complete agreement with Melancthon. Westphal continued the controversy, but Calvin kept silent, and handed him over to Beza. In our treatment of this second Sacramental War of the sixteenth century we do not propose to deal with the controversial writings as we dealt with those of Zwingli and Luther in the years 1524-1529. In that first controversy there was a real movement and development of teaching. It was then that both Luther's and Zwingli's doctrines attained definiteness and precision. Here, in the Westphal Controversy, there were two fully-developed systems of doctrine in conflict with each other. Flacian-Lutheranism, which resembled Megandrianism in its rigidity, was here determined to beat to the dust all that pertained to Melancthon-Calvinism. We also know that at the end of the controversy neither side had advanced a hairbreadth nearer to the position of the other.

Westphal contended for the acceptance of the full content of Luther's teaching. He did not distinguish between

its essential truth and its Scholastic scaffolding. Luther had certainly taught the local presence of Christ's body in the bread, ubiquity, and the partaking by unbelievers. He did so in opposition to what he supposed was the view of the Sacramentarians. This latter view laid little stress on the mystical union with Christ, and regarded the eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ as identical with believing in His death. Luther opposed to this teaching the local presence and the oral manducation, but at the heart of his doctrine there was the real conviction that in the transaction of the Lord's Supper there is a divine act of Christ, a new communication of Christ to us, and especially a mystical union with the Lord. These truths were enclosed in an outer shell of frail and questionable substance. Calvin and Melanchthon were at one with Luther in acknowledging these spiritual truths. Where they differed from him was merely in the question of the value of the outer shell.¹ This they practically rejected as worthless. Westphal now came forward and contended for the shell. What in Luther's teaching had been mere suggestions and speculations, Westphal regarded as necessary parts of doctrine. It did not dawn on him that in all essential things Luther and Calvin and Melanchthon were agreed. The method of his polemic was most objectionable. He did not understand, or did not wish to understand, what his opponents really taught concerning communion with Christ. Calvin had expressed himself most clearly on the subject. He had never spoken of a *communio imaginaria* in and through the thoughts or subjective belief. He had always contended for a real communion with Christ through the objective activity of the Holy Spirit. But Westphal always accused him of holding that "to eat the body of Christ" is the same as "believing with the mind." He accused him of teaching bare Megandrianism, clothed in ambiguous terms and words. The allegation might be made that Calvin had given Westphal some grounds for his complaint. In the Consensus Tigurinus we have seen that there was a slight departure from his original teaching, but nowhere did he say that it was an *act of faith* that brought Christ to us. Ebrard has discussed

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 549.

this question most minutely, and has set in contrast the three forms of teaching.¹

I. Calvin's original doctrine with which Melanchthon was agreed.

II. The teaching of the *Consensus Tigurinus*.

III. The teaching that Westphal attributed to Calvin.

I. There was the *teaching of Calvin in his earlier writings*, in which he set forth that in the Supper the whole divine-human Christ is really, objectively, and afresh communicated to us in a non-local manner. On our part, nothing is necessary but that a state of faith (*Glaubenszustand*) be present and continue, *i.e.*, that it be not interrupted in the moment of communion by frivolity or thoughtlessness. But a particular degree of faith is not demanded either for the first reception of Christ or for the renewed reception of Him. On the contrary, it is said that the renewed communication of Christ effects an increase and a strengthening of our weak state of faith. But on no account is it an *act of faith* which effects the communication of Christ to us.

II. The *teaching of the Consensus Tigurinus* is this:—In the Holy Supper the whole divine-human Christ is really, objectively, and afresh communicated to us in an illocal manner. On our part, it is not only necessary that a *state* of faith be present and continue for the reception of Christ who is objectively communicated to us, but the measure, *how much and how far* we receive Christ into ourselves, depends on the *degree* of faith that we possess at the time of reception. But it is not our *act of faith* (*Glaubensthat*) which (in that it transports us to heaven) brings to pass the union with Christ.

III. The *teaching that Westphal ascribes to Calvin* is this:—In the Lord's Supper, through the renewed remembrance of Christ, our subjective faith is strengthened, and in this strengthening of faith the soul transports itself in believing thought to Christ in heaven, and is thereby spiritually anew united to Him. The *act of faith* thus makes the Sacrament to be a Sacrament.

From this resumé we see that the teaching of the *Consensus Tigurinus* is widely different from the teaching that Westphal ascribes to Calvin, and that even had he con-

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 549 f.

tinued to hold the positions there maintained, he would have given little justification for the attacks that were levelled against him. But in the new defensive writings in controversy with Westphal, Calvin returns to his original testimony with which Melanchthon had been in fullest agreement. He repeats, for example, his old teaching on the objective communication of Christ, and he actually modifies what he had said of faith as a condition of reception in the *Consensus Tigurinus*. The teaching of the three treatises against Westphal is all of a piece. There is no difference in standpoint between the first and the last. It would be tedious to comment on them seriatim, and we content ourselves with reproducing in dialogue form a condensed statement of the chief topics of discussion. We are to imagine Calvin and Westphal *vis-à-vis*.¹

Westphal.—Here we have it at last. An open confederation with the Helvetians! What is this *Consensus Tigurinus* but a barefaced transition to the camp of the accursed Zwinglians, a crafty compromise with Bullinger, which serves to undermine the whole course of Lutheran Protestantism in favour of its enemies? And yet, you have professed to stand in the bosom of the Lutheran Church, and to be a true friend to the Augsburg Confession. Before all Germany, I proclaim you, John Calvin, a hypocrite and a traitor.

Calvin.—Your charge is false. I am guilty in this case of no duplicity and no change. My relation to Lutheranism remains what it was ten years ago. To one part of Luther's Sacramental theory, I never could assent. But the mystery itself which it sought to maintain had my full faith. As for the person of the great Reformer also, I have ever cherished the most profound reverence and regard. I might easily prove, moreover, that Luther himself looked upon my views with favour. Let Philip Melanchthon, however, be my one voucher in place of all others.² We have been of one mind here, and are of one mind still. I *did* subscribe the Augsburg Confession at Strasbourg, taking

¹ *Mercersburg Review*, September, 1850, *passim*.

² Nay, what opinion Luther himself formed of me, after he had inspected my writings, can be proved by competent witnesses. One will serve me for many—Philip Melanchthon (*Tracts*, ii. p. 253).

it in its generally acknowledged sense, as settled by the authority of its illustrious framer, the excellent Melancthon himself; and to this subscription I still adhere without any sort of mental reservation whatever.¹

Westphal.—A fine story truly, when we see you walking arm in arm with the Zwinglians, and passing yourself off as one of them!

Calvin.—All turns again on your own hasty construction. I have always set my face openly against the view commonly laid to Zwingli's charge, by which the idea of an actual communication with Christ's life is excluded from the mystery of the Lord's Supper. This I have not hitherto hesitated to stigmatise as absolutely profane; and I trust that I shall never cease to regard it in the same light. The Consensus Tigurinus, however, proceeds on the supposition throughout, that the proper Helvetic faith involves nothing really of this sort, and it is an effort simply to carry it out, by suitable explanation and definition, to such a full statement, as might serve to relieve it from this reproach, and set it in a correct light before the Christian world. The statement is no act of subscription, of course, to the system of Luther strictly so called. I have always rejected that; and it is openly rejected also in this Consensus. But the instrument is not for this reason a simple falling over to the opposite extreme. It is fairly and truly a bond of union and peace between the Helvetic Churches and the faith of the Augsburg Confession.

Westphal.—Nonsense! You do not pretend that this Consensus agrees with the Augsburg Confession!

Calvin.—Take the tenth Article of this Confession in the sense of its author, without any Popish perversion or gloss, and I contend that the Sacramental doctrine of the two instruments is in truth the same.²

¹ Nor indeed do I repudiate the Augsburg Confession, which I long ago (*pridem*) willingly and gladly subscribed in the sense interpreted by its author (Letter to Schalling, 25th March, 1557; quoted by Henry, ii. p. 294).

² Though I said that we comprehended in our agreement what the Confession of Augsburg contains, this is no ground for charging me with deceit, for I subscribe to the words there quoted.

As to their meaning, since Westphal is no competent judge, to whom can I better appeal than to the author himself? If he declares that I

Westphal.—You can hardly expect the world to give you credit for honesty and plain dealing in this business. You have been playing a game. You carry two faces.

Calvin.—God knows that this is not the case. I have had no worldly interest to serve; and I have used no concealment nor reserve. On the contrary, I have tried always to be both candid and clear, as far as language would admit; and it will be found, I think, that few men have taken more pains to let their position be known, or have less differed from themselves with the progress of time. My views now are just what they were stated to be twenty years ago in the First Edition of the Institutes.¹

Westphal.—Be it so then! It only shows that you have been all along a false teacher. For only look at this Consensus Tigurinus. It evacuates the Sacraments of their mystical force, and turns them into mere void signs.

Calvin.—That is a gross slander. Both the Consensus and the Exposition attached to it most distinctly affirm the contrary.²

Westphal.—You make the elements mere signs.

Calvin.—Signs certainly, but by no means naked and empty signs. Christ uses here no false colours. The verities represented by the power of God are made to go along with the signs. The last divinely certify the presence

deviate in the smallest from his idea, I will immediately submit. The case is different with Luther. I have always candidly declared what I felt wanting in his words, so far am I from having bound myself to them (*Tracts*, ii. p. 276 f.).

¹ What I justly claim for myself is, that I never, by employing an ambiguous form of expression, captiously brought forward anything different from my real sentiment (*Tracts*, ii. p. 253).

But the reader will find that nothing has been my greater care than, in absence of all ambiguity, to deliver distinctly what I daily profess and teach in the Church, and what God is my best witness and judge that I firmly believe (*Tracts*, ii. p. 279).

² We uniformly testify in our writings, that the Sacraments which the Lord has left us as seals and testimonies of His grace differ widely from empty figures. Our agreement distinctly declares, that the Lord, Who is true, performs inwardly by His Spirit that which the Sacraments figure to the eye, and that when we distinguish between the signs and the thing signified, we do not disjoin the reality from the signs. This view is followed out more fully and clearly in my Defence (*Tracts*, ii. p. 274).

of the first.¹ The things represented are at the same time exhibited or presented. That is to say, they are made to be actually at hand.

Westphal.—Exhibited, you mean, in the way of image or picture; but not as they are in their own nature. You explicitly deny, in the case of the Lord's Supper, the actual presence in any way of Christ's body and blood, materially considered, along with the bread and wine by which they are represented.

Calvin.—Certainly I have always rejected and reject still, most firmly, the idea of every sort of presence here that is to be regarded as local or material, or that may be said to fall within the experience and measure of mere nature as such. But this by no means implies that the realities signified by the symbols are absent, or that they are at hand only by way of picture. When I acknowledge their exhibition or presentation in the Sacrament, my meaning is always that they are made to be actually present in the whole power of their own proper nature, only not in the way of sense, but in a higher way.²

Westphal.—All is made to depend at last, however, on the exercises of the worshipper. The verities exhibited are present only in thought and contemplation, as these enter into the action of faith.

Calvin.—I mean not so. The verities are at hand objectively; the inward grace in the outward transaction. Faith is only the condition, not the cause of our mystical

¹ But according to us, the bread means body in such a sense, that it effectually and in reality invites us to communion with Christ. For we say that the reality which the promise contains is there exhibited, and that the effect is annexed to the external symbol. The trope, therefore, by no means makes void the sign, but rather shows how it is not void (*Tracts*, ii. p. 275).

² Thus the bread is not the empty picture of an absent thing, but a true and faithful pledge of our union with Christ. Some one will say that the symbol of bread does not shadow forth the body of Christ, any otherwise than a lifeless statue represents Hercules or Mercury. This fiction is certainly not less remote from our doctrine, than profane is from sacred (*Tracts*, ii. p. 276).

The Son of God promises to give His body, and we at once give full credit to His Word. And although carnal sense murmurs, and nature receives not a sublime mystery, wonderful even to angels, yet we firmly believe that He, by His celestial energy, accomplishes what the visible symbol figures (*Tracts*, ii. p. 297).

participation of Christ in the Supper. God forbid that I should think of turning the process into a mere mental exercise of any kind ! ¹

Westphal.—Still you will have it that the process is altogether spiritual ; and any objective force you may allow to the transaction will be found to resolve thus into the mere agency of the Holy Ghost, exciting faith, love and other graces.

Calvin.—Spiritual the process is, as distinguished from your crass conception of an oral manducation. The mystery centres in the soul, and is wrought by the vivific power of the Holy Ghost, under a mode of existence that transcends all natural experience and conception. But it is not a mere influence. The Spirit actually binds Christ and His people into one life ; not as a river may join two cities which are many miles apart by merely flowing through both, but as being the very form and medium under and by which the life of the first is made to pass over into the last. ²

Westphal.—The communion you think of in this way must be regarded as holding at last only with the *divine* nature in Christ, if it be allowed to have any reality at all ; for your theory completely excludes the presence of His body.

Calvin.—It does so only in a local or material view, but not at all as regards living power and force. The

¹ My writings everywhere proclaim that eating differs from faith, inasmuch as it is an effect of faith. I did not begin only three days ago to say that we eat Christ by believing, because being made truly partakers of Him, we grow up into one body, and have a common life with Him. Years have now elapsed since I began, and I have never ceased to repeat this. How base, then, it was of Westphal, while my words distinctly declare that eating is something else than believing, impudently to obtrude, what I strenuously deny, upon his readers, as if it had been actually uttered by me ! . . . Of the same nature is his next assertion, that if my words are taken, to eat the body of Christ is equivalent to receiving the promise by faith. How dare he so prostitute himself ! (*Tracts*, ii. p. 283).

² Our exposition is, that the body of Christ is spiritually eaten by us, because He vivifies our souls in the very manner in which our bodies are invigorated ; only we exclude a transfusion of substance. According to Westphal, the flesh of Christ is not vivifying unless its substance is devoured. . . . For I do not simply teach that Christ dwells in us by His Spirit, but that He so raises us to Himself as to transfuse the vivifying vigour of His flesh into us (*Tracts*, ii. pp. 283-286).

Communion which we have with Christ in the Sacrament is by no means limited to His divine nature, but extends to His humanity also, as the real seat and fountain of salvation for our dying world. In this sense it is, we are said to eat His flesh and drink His blood unto everlasting life.¹

Westphal.—You take the word body in an ambiguous sense ; for all that you allow in the end is that we partake of Christ's benefits ; which, as they are procured by His sufferings in the body, may be spoken of under the name of His flesh and blood. But all runs out in this way into a bold metaphor. You substitute in your mind an imagination merely for the true and proper body of our blessed Lord.

Calvin.—I never confound the benefits which we have by Christ with the idea of His *life*. It is idle to remind us, then, that His merits and benefits are not His body. The insinuation that this is all I mean by the communion of His flesh and blood is purely gratuitous, and does me gross injustice.² I own no fiction nor metaphor whatever in the case. The body of which we partake in the blessed Sacrament is the same that once hung upon the Cross, and is now glorified in heaven.³

Westphal.—And yet you will not hear of this being present in the Sacrament, but hold it to be absent from us by an immense distance. How then can we be said to partake of it in any real way ?

Calvin.—The whole is a mystery, as I have said before, in the sphere of the Spirit. Dynamically and organically, things may be joined together in the most intimate unity, which at the same time are wide apart in space. Christ's body remains indeed always in heaven, but by the power

¹ Thus I teach that Christ, though absent in body, is nevertheless not only present with us by His divine energy, which is everywhere diffused, but also makes His flesh give life to us (*Tracts*, ii. p. 285).

² Westphal objects that the merits or benefits of Christ are not His body. But why does he maliciously extenuate the force of an expression by which I highly extol our communion with Christ ?

For I not only say that His merits are applied, but that our souls receive nourishment from the very body of Christ in the same way as the body eats earthly bread (*Tracts*, ii. pp. 280-281).

³ He rejoins, that I am deceiving by using the term "body" in an ambiguous sense. But I thought I had sufficiently obviated such cavils by so often repeating that it was the true and natural body which was offered on the Cross (*Tracts*, ii. p. 238).

of the Holy Ghost, as something which transcends all local and mechanical relations, not only His divine life, as this is present in all places, but the proper life of His body also, the quickening vigour of His flesh and blood, is made to pass into the souls of His people, as a true aliment of immortality.¹

Westphal.—You confess this, however, to be only for the soul or mind of the communicant, not for his body.

Calvin.—Not for the body indeed in a direct and outward way, as your theory requires ; but just as little for the mind either, separately considered. Soul and mind are not the same thing. I mean by the soul, the central principle of our whole life, which in the end reaches out to the body also no less than to the spirit. In this way Christ is the true food, by which our whole nature is nourished unto immortality.²

Westphal.—A purely spiritual transaction thus, and nothing more, is made to stand for the whole mystery. The flesh of Christ, with you, is not present in the Supper. You do not allow an actual giving and receiving of His body.

Calvin.—The presence is spiritual, allow me to repeat, only as it is not material and local ; but not at all in any such sense as may be taken to overthrow its reality. As regards this, there is no difference nor debate. I freely allow here what the Sacrament requires, an actual participation in Christ's flesh and blood ; and this, without any sort of metaphor or rhetorical fiction. Only I cannot yield to your view of the *mode* in which this is brought to pass ; for it seems to me to be at war with the very object of the mystery itself ; and I see no reason in the Bible or else-

¹ From the hidden fountain of the Godhead, life was miraculously infused into the body of Christ, that it might flow from hence to us (*Tracts*, ii. p. 258).

Thus I teach that Christ, though absent in the body is, nevertheless, not only present with us by His divine energy, which is everywhere diffused, but also makes His flesh give life to us. For, seeing He penetrates to us by the secret influence of His Spirit, it is not necessary, as we have elsewhere said, that He should descend bodily (*Tracts*, ii. p. 285).

² *Nunc anima est quae corpus vivificat, ne sit mortuum cadaver ; ergo ab ea jure denominationem sumit. Post resurrectionem vero praestantior erit vis illa vivifica, quam a Spiritu accipiet* (Commentary on I. Cors. xv. 44).

where for its being made to hang exclusively on so gross a conception ; but every reason rather for insisting on a higher view. You seem to have no idea of presence in the case, save in the way of physical contact and transfusion. To my mind, I confess it is something far more real, in the form of a *living* entrance into the inmost sanctuary of the believer's *life*.¹

Westphal.—You take away the donation of the true and proper body, and give us what you are pleased to call its *virtue* and *vigour* merely in its stead.

Calvin.—When I say that Christ reaches us with the virtue of His *life*, I deny that any substitute is brought in that sets aside at all the donation of His body. I only explain the mode of the donation.²

Westphal.—It is a plain case, however, that what is given and taken in the Sacrament, as you hold it, is not the real matter of Christ's body, but something else. You will not allow that we partake of His *substance*.

Calvin.—Not of the outward material of His nature certainly in any way ; but still of its actual substantial life ; the vivific virtue of His true flesh and blood. Put away the crass thought of a manducation of the flesh, as though it were to enter the stomach by the mouth as common food, and there is no reason to deny that we are fed with Christ's flesh substantially. His body remains in heaven, while, nevertheless, life flows out from its very substance, and reaches down into the persons of His people,

¹ He says that it is fallaciously opposed to the presence and reception of a true body. I rejoin, that if he is not craftily glossing the matter, he is under a great delusion, as the controversy with us is not as to reception, but only the *mode* of reception.

He conceives that there is no bodily presence, if a body lurk not everywhere diffused under the bread ; and if believers do not swallow the body, he thinks that they are denied the eating of it (*Tracts*, ii. p. 282).

Westphal here exclaims that I am opposing the presence of the Spirit to the presence of the flesh ; but anyone not blinded by malevolence sees that the same passage makes it clearly evident how far I do so. For I do not simply teach that Christ dwells in us by His Spirit, but that He so raises us to Himself as to transfuse the vivifying vigour of His flesh into us (*Tracts*, ii. pp. 285-286).

² But when I say that Christ descends to us by His virtue, I deny that I am substituting something different, which is to have the effect of abolishing the gift of the body, for I am simply explaining the mode in which it is given (*Tracts*, ii. p. 279)

just as the substance of the head passes over continually to the members in the natural body.¹

Westphal.—You are a perfect eel, sir, as all the world may see ; slimy and slippery to the very tail. There is no such thing as holding you fast.² Your “virtue” and “vigour” of Christ’s body resolve themselves, when all is said, into the idea of a mere influence proceeding from Him through the Spirit ; and mean simply the efficacy and value of His death, made available for our benefit by God, and so appropriated on our side by faith.

Calvin.—Miserable misrepresentation ! How often must I protest against your trick of turning my words into a sense which they openly disown ? Have I not said in all possible ways that Christ must be distinguished from the fruits He brings to pass, and that He must go before them also in the way of actual and real appropriation on the part of His people ? Christ *first*, and only *then*, His merits and benefits. By “virtue” or “efficacy,” here, I understand always the essential living force of the Redeemer’s body, once slain and now in heaven ; as I use the word “vigour” also to express its actual power and substance, the very sap of its heavenly constitution. This in its glorified state is all “life and spirit” ; a body, of course, still ; but not such as belongs to our present mortal condition. It is capable thus of reaching over, *by* the Spirit, and we may say also *in* the Spirit, into the souls of His people on earth ; as the head is able to live itself, in a lower sphere, into its members, or the root into its branches independently of all local contact !³

¹ Should anyone raise a dispute as to the word “substance,” we assert that Christ, from the substance of His flesh, breathes life into our souls ; nay, infuses His own life into us, provided always that no transfusion of substance be imagined (*Tracts*, ii, p. 248).

² In this doctrine I still persist, and therefore Westphal is no less ignorant than unjust in comparing me to an eel. What does he find dubious or equivocating in the doctrine, that the body of Christ is truly spiritual food, by whose substance our souls are fed and live, and that this is fulfilled to us in the Supper not less really than it is figured by the external symbols ? Only let no one falsely imagine that the body is, as it were, brought down from heaven and enclosed in the bread. This exception offends Westphal, and he explains that I am an eel, which cannot be held by its tail (*Tracts*, ii, p. 278).

³ Because I say, that Christ dwelling in us raises us to Himself, and transfuses the life-giving vigour of His flesh into us, just as we are invigorated by the vital warmth of the rays of the sun, and again, that

Westphal.—Clouds ! Clouds ! Spare us, if you please, these transcendental flights. We have no wings, to soar into regions so high and rare. Seriously, we do not want to philosophise in the matter. Let us stick to the plain sense of the Bible. What is the voice of Reason, with its carnal perplexities and plausibilities, over against the voice of Christ ? ¹

Calvin.—I would a hundred times rather die than weigh the smallest single word of Christ against the whole world of philosophy. My theology comes from another quarter. It is not philosophy which teaches either that human flesh is endowed with life-giving virtue, or that this life breathes from heaven, or that we come into possession of it efficaciously under the outward symbol of bread. Nothing of this sort falls in with common-sense, or comes forth from the philosophical schools. The word of Him who founded the Sacrament is held up to us in opposition. But what is it that He says ? That He gives us His own body. This promise I reverently embrace, not stopping in what is before the eyes only, the mere bread and wine, but accepting by faith the *life* itself, which, proceeding from Christ's flesh and blood, is secretly conveyed into our very souls. The charge of substituting philosophy for God's word holds in truth only against the other side. It is Westphal who theorises here, not Calvin ! ²

Christ, while remaining in Heaven, descends to us by His virtue, he charges me with overturning the faith of the Church, as if I were denying that Christ gives us His body. But when I say that Christ descends to us by His virtue, I deny that I am substituting something different, which is to have the effect of abolishing the gift of His body (*Tracts*, ii. p. 229).

¹ There is no ground for what Westphal trumpets forth with regard to a conflict between theology and philosophy. For it is not philosophy which dictates to us either that human flesh is endued with spiritual virtue, so as to give life to our souls, or that this life breathes from heaven, or that we gain effectual possession of the same life under the external symbol of bread. Nothing of the kind lies within the reach of common-sense, or can come forth from schools of philosophy (*Tracts*. ii. p. 289).

² I would rather perish a hundred times than put one little word of Christ into the balance, and counterweigh it by the whole body of philosophy, as Westphal demands. Unjustly, therefore, does Westphal charge us with leaning more on the dictates of philosophy than on the Word of God. I, in my turn, admonish him to lay aside his petulance, and allow himself to be instructed in the genuine meaning of the Word of God. If he will not, I must leave him and the phantom which he absurdly discovers in the words of Christ (*Tracts*, ii. p. 290).

Westphal.—It is fine for you to talk in that style! Your theory is made up of speculation, and is so full of riddles and contradictions that a plain Bible Christian, like myself, must puzzle himself in vain to say what it means. It may be questioned whether you understand your own meaning.

Calvin.—God knows the simplicity and honesty of my faith; while I am not ashamed freely to acknowledge here the helplessness of my poor understanding. St. Paul himself pronounces the whole subject a "great mystery." So I feel it to be in my inmost soul. My faith bows before it in childlike homage.

The above dialogue reproduces the argument of Westphal and Calvin, omitting the personalities exchanged between the two in the course of the heated controversy. We cannot but recognise that in his dealing with his adversary Calvin returns to the clearer testimony of his earlier writings. We shall have occasion later to refer to the Westphal-Calvin literature, when we shall discuss the charge of ambiguity and inconsistency that is so often levelled against him. For it is in these controversial treatises of Calvin that we find his teaching in its clearest and most definite form. Doumergue¹ has noted this fact, and remarks how in the second Sacramental War "Calvin was forced to enter into less abstract explanations of his doctrine." Stähelin has summarised that doctrine in a series of propositions, which can all be substantiated by reference to the passages which we have quoted as our authority for this short imaginary dialogue.

SUMMING UP OF CALVIN'S TEACHING ON THE LORD'S SUPPER IN THE WESTPHAL CONTROVERSY.

I. In the action of the Lord's Supper, there is a real, objective communication of Christ to the participant.

II. Bread and wine are pledges of the certainty of this communication by virtue of the promise that Christ is willing to communicate Himself anew as often as the Sacrament is celebrated.

III. That which Christ communicates is Himself, according to His Godhead, Manhood, Spirit and Body.

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 358.

IV. From the substance of His glorified body, which is essentially power, there comes a real energy, a living energy, into the centre (*Mittelpunkt*) of our immortal being or soul.

V. This takes place in no local fashion, as if this power moved through the space between Christ and us. It takes place illocally, by an almighty act of the Holy Ghost.

VI. We have therefore not to seek Christ locally in the bread, but to raise our minds and thoughts to Him in heaven, and to expect (*erwarten*) this communication from there.

VII. This objective communication is not effected through an act of faith on our part, but rather through an almighty act of Christ and of the Holy Ghost.

VIII. It depends not on the degree of faith which we possess, but it takes place even if the communicant is positively godless.

IX. But only they who are in a state of faith (*Glaubenszustand*) can receive the Christ, who communicates Himself to us.

X. The others repel Him and His real communication, while the former, whatever be the degree of faith they possess, are advanced therein through the new communication of Christ.¹

¹ Stähelin, *op. cit.* ii. p. 222.

CHAPTER XIV

CALVIN'S FINAL TEACHING ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

THE INSTITUTES OF 1559.¹

The Third Edition of the Institutes (1559)—Calvin and Hesshuss—*De Vera Participatione*—The Best Means of Attaining Concord—Calvin's Doctrine of the Lord's Supper in a Series of Propositions.

WE have now come to the Third Edition of the Institutes (Geneva, 1559)—“A work as new, compared with that of 1539, as the latter was new, compared with that of 1536.”² It is the ripe fruit of Calvin's teaching, free from the ambiguity of the Consensus Tigurinus.

It is not an irenical writing, for, as Wernle says, it clearly shows that all his efforts towards mediation have been frustrated and shattered.³ The bitterness of the attacks of Westphal and his followers has left a deep mark upon his soul. And yet it is the pure milk of Calvin's doctrine that we have set before us in 1559.

The question of the *End and Reason* for the Institution of the Supper is placed in the forefront of the discussion. To enquire as to *how* Christ's body is present he characterises as a vain and curious task. He speaks of this only after the religious worth of the Sacrament has been clearly stated.

¹ Quotations in this chapter are from *Joannis Calvini Institutio Christianae Religionis*, A. Tholuck, chapter xvii. pp. 400-441. Donzé, *La Sainte Cène d'après Calvin*, p. 27 ff.

² Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 8.

³ Wernle, *John Calvin*, p. 114.

I. THE END FOR WHICH OUR LORD INSTITUTED THIS HOLY SACRAMENT

1st. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper exhibits to us the meaning and importance of the death of Christ.

"After God has once received us into His family, it is not that He may regard us in the light of servants but of sons. He provides for our maintenance during the whole course of our life. And not content with this, He has been pleased, by a pledge, to assure us of His continued liberality. To this end He has given another Sacrament to His Church, by the hand of His only begotten Son, viz., a spiritual feast, at which Christ testifies that He Himself is Living Bread. First, then, the signs are bread and wine, which represent the spiritual food which we receive from the body and blood of Christ. . . . God continually supplies the food by which He may sustain and preserve us in the life to which He has begotten us by His Word. Moreover, Christ is the only food of our souls, and therefore our Heavenly Father invites us to Him, that, refreshed by Him, we may ever and anon gather new vigour, until we reach the heavenly immortality. . . . We now, therefore, understand the *End* which the mystical benediction has in view, viz., to assure us that the body of Christ was once sacrificed for us, so that we may now eat it, and eating, feel within ourselves the efficacy of that one sacrifice—that His blood was once shed for us so as to be our perpetual drink" (Sect. I). *The Lord's Supper thus exhibits to us the meaning and importance of the death of Christ.*

2nd. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a testimony that we form one body in Christ, and that everything which is His, we may call our own. Christ becomes our property.¹ This is a fact of which we have in this Sacrament quite as striking a proof as if Christ Himself were placed in bodily presence before our view, or handled by our hands. Christ is our spiritual food. He is the Bread of life. Thanks to these words which cannot deceive us, "Take, eat, and drink. This is My body which is broken for you. This is My blood which is shed for the remission of your sins," we

¹ Destrech, *Essai sur la doctrine de la Sainte Cène d'après Calvin*, p. 19.

have an assurance, not only that Christ's body and blood are ours, but that they are ours for the nourishment of our spiritual life (Sect. 3). "For when bread is given us as a symbol of the body of Christ, we must immediately think of the following similitude. As bread nourishes, sustains, and protects our bodily life, so the body of Christ is the only food to invigorate and keep alive the soul. When we behold wine set forth as a symbol of the blood, we must think that such use as wine serves to the body, the same is bestowed spiritually by the blood of Christ; and the use is to foster, refresh, strengthen and invigorate. And if we duly consider what profit we have gained by the breaking of His sacred body and the shedding of His blood, we shall clearly perceive that these properties of bread and wine, agreeably to this analogy, most appropriately represent it, when they are communicated to us" (Sects. 3, 4). The importance of the Sacrament does not reside then simply in the holding forth of the body of Christ in His corporal presence, but rather in the confirmation of the promise whereby He testifies to us that He is the Bread of Life. "The bread which I will give, is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." *The Lord's Supper therefore is full of benefits for the believer. It is a divine nutriment—a food for the soul.*

II. HOW THE BENEFITS OF THE SACRAMENT BECOME OURS

The next section discusses the application of the benefits offered to us by Christ. The Gospel applies these benefits, but the Lord's Supper does it more *clearly*. Christ there offers Himself to us with all His benefits and blessings, and we receive Him in faith. We are not to suppose that the Supper makes Christ for the *first* time the Bread of life. It calls to remembrance that Christ was made the Bread of life that we may constantly eat Him, and it gives us a taste and relish for that Bread, and makes us feel its efficacy. Once and for all, Christ gave Himself, and became the Bread of Life, when He gave Himself to be crucified for the redemption of the world. He offers Himself to be partaken by us, and seals that offer by the sacred mystery

of the Supper. "He there accomplishes inwardly, what He externally designates" (Sect. 5). Hitherto, Calvin has been speaking in general terms, but now he confesses that there is no common agreement as to the manner of the application. "All are not agreed as to the *mode* of partaking of Him" (Sect. 5). "For there are some who define the eating of the flesh of Christ and the drinking of His blood to be in one word, nothing more than believing in Christ Himself. But Christ seems to have intended to teach something more express and more sublime in that noble discourse, in which He recommends the eating of His flesh, viz., that we are quickened by the true partaking of Him, which He designated by the terms eating and drinking, lest anyone should suppose that the life which we obtain from Him is obtained by simple knowledge.

"For, as it is not the sight but the eating of the bread that gives nourishment to the body, so the soul must partake of Christ truly and thoroughly, that by His energy it may grow up into eternal life. Meanwhile, we admit that this is nothing else than the eating of faith, and that no other eating can be imagined. But there is this difference between their mode of speaking and mine. According to them, to eat is merely to believe, while I maintain that the flesh of Christ is eaten by believing. In this way, the Lord was pleased, by calling Himself the 'Bread of life,' not only to teach that our salvation is treasured up in the faith of His death and resurrection, but also, by virtue of true communion with Him, His *life* passes into us and becomes ours, just as bread, when taken for food, gives vigour to the body" (Sect. 5). This is a clear assertion of the mystical union. This real and inward communion is not merely a union with Christ's Godhead or Spirit, but with His glorified body.

"Nor am I satisfied with the view of those who, while acknowledging that we have some kind of communion with God, only make us partakers of His Spirit, omitting all mention of the flesh and blood. As if it were said to no purpose that His flesh is meat indeed, and His blood is drink indeed, and that we have no life, unless we eat that flesh and drink that blood and so forth" (Sect. 7).

Calvin does not profess to give a *full* explanation of the

"how" of this mystical union. It is a mystery which he feels, but is unable to comprehend with his mind. He does not wish to measure its sublimity by his feeble capacity.

Doumergue commends this humility. "I know that some will reply, 'All this does not solve the problem.' I know what I shall reply. There is in this honest statement of the problem, in this effort to solve it, and in this confessed incapacity to solve it, more theology, more true theology . . . than in all the solutions which have been proposed."¹

Calvin now sets forth a summary of his view of the mystery, and here we have a glimpse of the sublime reaches of his theory. He leads us beyond the cosmic fact of the death of Christ, to the truth of His pre-existent life. He conducts us to the very source and fountain of our salvation.

"First of all we are taught by the Scriptures that Christ was from the beginning the Living Word of the Father, the Fountain and the Origin of life, from which all things should receive life. Hence, John calls Him the 'Word of life,' and at another time says that in Him was life. But when man became alienated from God by sin, he lost this communication of life, and saw death on every side impending over him. It was necessary then, in order that man might regain the hope of immortality, that he should be restored to the communion of that Word of life. To effect this, the Word became flesh, and began to dwell in our nature. And this very flesh in which He resides, He makes vivifying for us. By partaking of it, we feed for immortality. 'I am,' He says, 'the Bread of Life. I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven. And the bread that I will give, is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world' (John vi. 48, 51).

"By these words Christ declares, not only that He is life, inasmuch as He is the eternal Son of God, Who came down from Heaven, but by coming down, gave vigour to the flesh which He assumed, that a communication of life to us might there emanate. Hence too, He adds that 'His flesh is meat indeed, and that His blood is drink indeed,' and that by this food, believers are reared (*educantur*) to eternal life. The pious, therefore, have admirable comfort

¹Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 363.

in this, that they now find life in their own flesh. For they not only reach it by easy access, but have it spontaneously set before them. Let them only throw open the doors of their hearts, that they may take it into their embrace, and they will obtain it " (Sect. 8).

Calvin now breaks into exclamation at a truth so obvious to himself. "Who does not see that the communion of the flesh and blood of Christ is necessary to all who aspire to the holy life?" (Sect. 9). He next quotes Ephesians v. 32, to prove how *intimate* this communion is. "We perceive that all these things cannot possibly take place unless He adheres to us wholly in body and in spirit. But the very close connection which unites us to His flesh, Paul illustrated with still more splendid epithets, when he said that 'we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones' (Ephesians v. 30). The sum is, that the flesh and blood of Christ feed our souls, just as bread and wine support our corporal life. For there would be no aptitude in the signs, did not our souls find their nourishment in Christ. This could not be, did not Christ freely form one with us, and refresh us by the taking of His flesh, and the drinking of His blood" (Sect. 10).

An attempt is now made to explain *how* this mystical communion is attained. As in former writings, so here, he suggests that it is accomplished by means of the secret virtue of the Holy Spirit. "But though it seems an incredible thing that the flesh of Christ, while at such a distance from us in respect of space, should be food to us, let us remember how far the secret virtue of the Holy Spirit surpasses all our conceptions, and how foolish it is to wish to measure its immensity by our feeble capacity. Therefore, what our mind does not comprehend, let faith conceive, viz., that the Spirit truly unites things separated by space" (Sect. 10).

We have here no mention of the "lifting up of our souls to heaven," which Doumergue characterises as a "mere suggestion on the part of Calvin, who does not propound it as a final solution."¹

Christ communicates Himself to us through an almighty act of the Holy Spirit.

¹Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 263.

He now comes to the question as to *when* Christ communicates Himself to us, and he says quite clearly that the Lord's Supper is not merely a pledge that a real mystical fellowship *exists* between the communicant and Christ. It is a pledge that Christ communicates Himself *anew*. "That sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses His life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow, He testifies and seals in the Supper, and that, not by presenting a vain and empty sign, but by exerting an efficacy of the Spirit, by which He fulfils what He promises. And, truly, the thing there signified He exhibits and offers to all who sit down at that spiritual feast, although it is received by believers only" (Sect. 10).

This is a clear statement that the Lord's Supper communicates a *special* gift or grace to the receiver. It has peculiar spiritual efficacy. We draw from it a more particular blessing than we can obtain from the general preaching of the Word. The Lord's Supper exhibits. It presents.

"We duly infer from the exhibition of the symbol that the thing itself is exhibited" (Sect. 10, p. 406).

It is here that Professor Lindsay finds that element in Calvin's theory which enabled him to convince Luther that he held that there was a real presence of Christ's body in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. "Calvin was willing to call the elements signs of the body and blood of the Lord, but while Zwingli called them signs of that which is absent; *representiva*, Calvin insisted on calling them signs which exhibit what is present, *exhibitiva*."¹ This is further explained by the following quotation:

"I say, then, that in the mystery of the Supper, by the symbols of the bread and wine, Christ, His body and His blood, are truly exhibited to us, that in them, He fulfilled all obedience, in order to procure righteousness for us,

First, that we might become one body with Him, and, *Second*, that being made partakers of His substance, we might feel the result of this fact in the participation of all His benefits" (Sect. 11, p. 407).

¹ Lindsay, *History of the Reform*, ii. p. 59.

In clear language Calvin sums up his position as follows. He finds *two* things in the mystery of the Supper.

(a) The corporal signs which, presented to the eye, represent invisible things in a manner adapted to our weak capacity.

(b) The spiritual truth which is at once figured and exhibited in the signs.

He considers that its nature includes *three* things.

(a) The thing meant, which consists in the promises which are in a manner included in the signs.

(β) The matter or substance which is Christ, with His death and resurrection.

(γ) The effect—redemption, justification, sanctification, eternal life, and all other benefits which Christ bestows upon us.

III. ERRONEOUS CONCEPTIONS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER—

Institutes, Book iv. (Chapter 17, Sections 11-25, and Chapter 18)

A. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

The Council of Trent was opened by Pope Paul III. on 13th December, 1545, and lasted with long interruptions till 4th December, 1563.

The 13th Session dealt with the *De Eucharistiae Sacramento* (11th October, 1551). The 22nd Session (17th September, 1562) discussed the *Doctrina de Sacrificio Missae*.

In the *Third Edition of the Institutes* (1559), Calvin gives an exhaustive exposition of his views on the Roman Catholic doctrine. He deals in book iv. chapter 17 with transubstantiation, and in chapter 18 with the Mass.

(a) *Transubstantiation*

In his discussion of this subject he makes at the outset a clear distinction between the presence of Christ in the Sacrament and the local presence in the bread. "We are not to dream of such a presence of Christ in the Sacrament as the artificers of the Romish Court imagined, as if the body of Christ, locally present, were to be taken into the hand, and chewed by the throat. That is but to revive the Confession of Berengarius. The body of Christ is bounded according to the invariable rule in the human body, and is contained

in heaven. It is unlawful to bring it back under the corruptible elements, or to imagine it everywhere present. And there is no need of this corporal presence in order to ensure our partaking of it, since, as we have already seen, the Spirit unites us to Christ. He is a kind of channel by which everything that Christ has and is, is derived to us" (Sect. 12, p. 407).

"For if we see that the sun, in sending forth its rays upon the earth, to generate, cherish and invigorate, in a manner transfuses its substance into it, why should the radiance of the Spirit be less in conveying to us the communion of His flesh and blood? Wherefore the Scripture, when it speaks of our participation in Christ, refers its whole efficacy to the Spirit."

Here we have the familiar "dynamical" conception which we have already met with in all Calvin's previous writings. Professor Lindsay is of opinion that it was in his study of the mediaeval idea of transubstantiation that Calvin found the basis of his own doctrine.¹

"He went back to the mediaeval doctrine of transubstantiation, and asked whether it gave him a true conception of what was meant by substance. He decided that it did not, and believed that the root thought in substance was not dimension in space, but power, active and passive. The substance of a body consists in its power, active and passive, and the presence of the substance of anything consists in the immediate application of that power. When Luther and Zwingli had spoken of the substance of the body of Christ, they had always in their mind the thought of something extended in space; and the one affirmed while the other denied that this body of Christ, this something extended in space, could be and was present in the Sacrament of the Supper. Calvin's conception of substance enabled him to say that wherever anything *acts*, there it is. He denied the crude 'substantial' presence which Luther insisted upon, and in this he sided with Zwingli. But he affirmed a real, because active presence, and in this, he sided with Luther." This is in harmony with what we have already said in our discussion of the First Edition of the Institutes (1536).

¹ Lindsay, *op. cit.* ii. p. 59.

Calvin had no need of a theory of transubstantiation. He held it to be a fiction that "the bread is converted into the body of Jesus Christ . . . that Christ, in order to conceal Himself under the figure of the bread, reduces the substance to nothing" (Sect. 14, p. 409).

Besides this, *transubstantiation is in direct opposition to Scripture.*

"The three Evangelists and Paul relate that Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks, brake it, and gave it to the disciples, saying, 'Take eat, this is My body which is given for you.' . . . What Christ takes into His hands . . . He declares to be His body, but He had taken *bread*, and, therefore, who sees not that what is given, is still bread?"

"Paul expresses himself thus, 'The bread which we break.' And what is a Sacrament, if there is not an external sign which renders sensible to us the grace of which it is the means? How could Christ say to us that it is the bread which nourishes our souls, if He did not present to us true bread, material bread, which would figure the spiritual bread? Besides, the sacred writers have not written, 'This is changed into My body.' 'Est' never means 'is transubstantiated.'

"The Evangelists and Paul add that the Lord took the cup and gave it to the disciples, saying, 'This is My blood shed for you in remission of sins.' The formula, 'This cup is the New Testament in my blood,' which one meets in Luke and Paul, has the same sense as that which is reported by Matthew and Mark. From this, it evidently results, that the cup, *i.e.*, the wine in the cup, is the testament or guarantee that the blood of Christ is given to us, that our covenant with God is ratified.

"Now what would become of the guarantee of our covenant with God if the wine were not there in substance? To take the words of the Institution literally, as the partisans of transubstantiation do, there is no reason for not admitting also that the cup changes substance, and disappears like the bread" (Sect. 20).

Transubstantiation is also contrary to the faith of the ancient Church.

"I admit, indeed, that some of the ancients occasionally used the term 'conversion,' not that they meant to do

away with the substance in the external signs, but to teach that the bread of the Sacrament is different from ordinary bread, in the sense that it is consecrated for a new use. . . . Thus in speaking of baptism, the Fathers acknowledge that there operates a 'conversion' there, since a corruptible element like water becomes the spiritual laver of the soul, and yet no one denies that it remains water. . . . Besides, they all agree in saying that the bread and wine are the earthly signs of the body and blood of Christ. . . . In short, why make the Lord descend into the elements, and substitute Him for them, rather than leave Him in the heavens, where He has gone, no more to leave them. . . . It is there alone that He is present in the body and ought to be adored. . . . We do not read in the accounts of the Institution of the Supper that the disciples adored the Sacrament, that they made an idol of the bread. It is written that we ought to raise our hearts on high (*sursum corda*), to adore there, Christ seated in the heavenly glory" (Colos. iii. 2) (Sects. 14, 19, 36, 45, 46).

Calvin in this chapter comments on several other abuses associated with the Roman Catholic Church.

COMMUNION ONCE A YEAR

The custom which prescribes *Communion once a year* is an "invention of the devil, for it involves spiritual indolence for all the rest of the year. Chrysostom protests against such ideas. He complains that the people did not receive the Sacrament during the rest of the year, even when prepared for it, but only at Easter, though unprepared. . . . The Fathers at this period, conforming to the practice of the Apostolic Church, recommend the frequent use of the Supper."

THE DENIAL OF THE CUP TO THE LAITY

This Roman Catholic custom is another "device of Satan." "It annuls the ordinance of the Lord Himself Who has said, 'Drink ye all of it.' But the Roman Catholics reply, 'Jesus Christ distributed the cup to His disciples as to sacrificers, *i.e.*, as to priests.' Where did the Church see that in Scripture? Was it not rather as Christians that the twelve received the cup from the hand of the Lord?

"In short, if the Lord had found worthy of receiving the cup only the sacrificers or priests, would the Fathers have dared to call to the participation in the cup those who would have been excluded by Him? Would they have dared, Tertullian, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, Gelasius, to do this? The Fathers mention the use of the two elements, not only for the priests, but also for the believers. Further, why deprive lay communicants of one of the two signs, when the Lord made use of both, showing that in Him alone are the two things necessary for life—eating and drinking?"

"But," continues the Roman Catholic Church, "a single element suffices—the bread, for the body contains the blood by concomitance."

"The height of audacity," says Calvin. "Why not then suppress all the Sacraments, since Christ would be able to render us participators of His flesh and His blood, without any external aid?" (Sects. 47, 48, p. 439).

THE MASS

In Chapter XVIII. of the Third Edition of the Institutes, Calvin deals with the Mass.

Transubstantiation is the condition previous to the Mass. The Mass is the logical result of transubstantiation. By transubstantiation and similar inventions, "Satan has attempted to adulterate and envelop the sacred Supper of Christ as with thick darkness, that its purity might not be preserved to the Church" (Chap. xviii., Sect. 1).

The Mass in its turn produces *five consequences* all equally anti-evangelical (Sects. 2, 3, 5, 6 of Chap. 18).

1st. *It offers intolerable blasphemy and insult to Christ.*

"He was not appointed Priest and Pontiff by the Father for a time merely, as priests were appointed in the Old Testament. Since their life was mortal, their priesthood could not be immortal, and hence there was need of successors. But Christ, being immortal, had not the least occasion to have a vicar substituted for Him. Wherefore He was appointed by His Father to be a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, that He might eternally exercise a permanent priesthood."

2nd. *The Mass overthrows the Cross of Christ by setting up an altar.*

"For if on the Cross He offered Himself in sacrifice that He might sanctify us for ever, and purchase for us eternal redemption, undoubtedly, the power and efficacy of His sacrifice continues without end. Otherwise, we should not think more honourably of Christ than of the oxen and calves which were sacrificed under the Law, the offering of which proved to be inefficacious, because often repeated."

3rd. *The Mass banishes the remembrance of Christ's death.*

"If Jesus Christ is sacrificed at each Mass, He must be cruelly slain every moment in a thousand places. This is not my argument, but the Apostle's, when he says, 'Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world.'"

4th. *The Mass robs us of the benefits of Christ's death.*

"For the doctrine which is disseminated by the ministers of Satan, and which, in the present day, they defend by clamour, fire and sword, is that when we offer Christ to the Father in the Mass, we, by the work of oblation, obtain remission of sins, and become partakers of the sufferings of Christ. What is now left for the sufferings of Christ, but to be an example of redemption, that we may thereby learn to be our own Redeemers?"

5th. *The Mass abolishes the Lord's Supper.*

"While the Supper itself is a gift of God, which was to be received with thanksgiving, the sacrifice of the Mass pretends to give a price to God to be received as satisfaction. As widely as giving differs from receiving, does sacrifice differ from the Sacrament of the Supper" (Sect. 7, p. 446).

"The merciless enumeration continues," says Doumergue. "These errors have opened the way to private Masses which destroy the common participation in the Supper."¹ "The Supper was to be dispensed at the public meeting of the Church, to remind us of the communion by which we are all united to Jesus Christ. This communion, the private Mass dissolves and tears asunder. The private Masses more resemble an excommunication than that communion ordained by the Lord" (Sec. 7, p. 446).

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 346.

Calvin was unsparing in his polemic against the Church of Rome. His "Canons of the Council of Trent with the antidote" was a systematic analysis and review, and notwithstanding all that has been written on the subject, its usefulness as a complete Protestant manual has not been superseded.

B. ERRONEOUS CONCEPTIONS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER— THE LUTHERAN

We have already said that when Calvin produced the Third Edition of the Institutes (1559) he was still under the influence of the Westphal controversy. He has not the same hopes now of a great united Protestant Confession, and he subjects the Lutheran theory to a keen and searching analysis. He rejects entirely consubstantiation, ubiquity, and the partaking of unbelievers. The Lutherans had said that the body of Christ is present "in, with, and under" the elements of the Holy Supper, which elements nevertheless preserve their substance. He would not object to the phrase, "the inclusion of Christ under the bread," if they would explain this to mean that when the bread is held forth in the Sacrament an exhibition of the body is annexed, "because the truth is inseparable from the sign."

"But they explain the presence of the body of Christ under the bread and wine by saying that it is present everywhere. They attach to the body a ubiquity which is contrary to its nature" (Sects. 16, 17, 19).

"They insist that the body of Christ is invisible and immense, so that it may be hid under the bread." "The Lutherans do not hesitate to assert that the dimensions of Christ's flesh are not more circumscribed than those of heaven and earth. They say that if the Lord was incarnate and enclosed in the limits of a human body, whilst His body has always been infinite as the heavens, it was by a kind of dispensation, in order that He might perform what was necessary for our salvation."

But that, according to Calvin, is pure Marcionism.

Some employ a more subtle evasion, "that the body which is given in the Sacrament is glorious and immortal, and that, therefore, there is no absurdity in its being con-

tained under the Sacrament in various places or in no place and no form. But if, since it is a question of the body of Christ, we ask ourselves what body the Lord Jesus gave to His disciples, we are forced to acknowledge that it could only be His mortal body which was to be delivered up shortly, and not His glorious body."

The Lord was not yet glorified.

"Moreover, to affirm that Christ is corporally under the bread and wine, is to say that the blood is in the sign of the body, on the one hand, and the body in the sign of the blood, on the other hand."

"This idea of concomitance will not hold, for by the confession of the Lutherans, the signs (which contain, the one, the body alone, and the other, the blood alone) were *separately* distributed by the Lord. It follows, then, that as the bread and the wine are separated the one from the other, so the body ought to be separated from the blood, and the blood from the body. Besides, to enclose Christ under the elements, is to injure His heavenly glory, and to place Him everywhere is to ascribe to His human nature an attribute which does not properly pertain to it."

Calvin also objects to the consubstantiation of the Lutherans on the ground that it is *contrary to the Holy Scripture* (Sect. 21).

He holds that they take the words literally, in spite of numerous passages in the holy books which support the symbolical interpretation.

"When John says, 'The Holy Ghost was not given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified,' the literal sense is impossible, for no one would deny the eternal essence of the Holy Spirit" (Sect. 22).

"St. Augustine maintains, speaking of the Sacraments, that because of their similitude to the things which they symbolise (without which they would not be Sacraments) they bear the name of these things" (Sect. 21).

It is thus that the bread which figures in the Sacrament of the Supper, the body of Christ, takes the name of the body of Christ. It is quite simply *metonymy*. There is, therefore, only one way of understanding the words of the Institution—the *sacramental* way.

Calvin now seeks to answer *certain objections* which the Lutherans were wont to make to his particular theory.

a. "To seek the true and natural sense hidden in the words of the Lord, rather than to stick to their form," one says, "you show a lack of faith."

"No," replies Calvin; "to examine attentively the words of the Master, as we do, is, on the contrary, to hold them in great consideration. It is to bow with respect before their authority" (Sects. 23 and 24).

b. "They give out that we are so wedded to human reason that we attribute nothing more to the power of God than the order of nature admits. But is it indeed a rational doctrine that teaches that Christ nourishes our souls with His flesh, as our bodies are nourished with bread and wine? To maintain that the flesh has the virtue of vivifying souls, that our souls take from the flesh that remains in heaven spiritual and heavenly food, is that to maintain things conforming to human reason?" (Sects. 23 and 24).

c. "One cannot," reply our adversaries, "subject a glorified body to the laws of nature. It is necessary, then, that the body of Christ be everywhere without any human form." "But this brings with it the dream of Servetus, which all pious souls justly abhor, that Christ's body was absorbed by His Divinity. If it is necessary to admit a body, able to be in several places at the same time, one finds oneself in presence of this alternative, either one is forced to reject the resurrection of bodies, or one is forced to acknowledge that in assuming the heavenly glory, Jesus Christ has not thrown off His human nature. Now He has kept flesh and blood after the resurrection, for, what would become of the faith in the resurrection without that?" (Sect. 33).

"It is with the Father, Jesus wishes us to contemplate Him, not under the elements of the Holy Supper. It is not necessary to seek Him here below, under the bread and wine, but in heaven. Let us lift up our hearts and our thoughts on high, to seek there the body of Christ in heaven, from where He sheds into our souls by the Holy Ghost the power of life, which is the effect of his broken body. That is the true fashion of receiving the body and blood of our Lord.

" This communication of Christ is not such as the Lutherans believe, that His body is 'under' the bread, for it takes place by virtue of the Holy Spirit. The eating of the body of Christ, which we admit, is quite as true and real as theirs " (Sects. 31, 33).

d. " Their objection that we only participate in the effect of the flesh of the Lord, and not in the flesh itself, has no foundation, for we say that the flesh of Christ and the effect of the flesh are one. To receive into our souls the life of the flesh and blood of Christ crucified, and to taste of its expiatory efficacy, what else is this, than to eat really the flesh and to drink the blood of Christ? " (Sect. 29).

This is Calvin's criticism of the correlated Lutheran doctrines of consubstantiation and ubiquity. He now proceeds to a discussion of what they term the *Sacramental Eating of the body and blood of Christ*. The Lutherans had defined the Sacramental Eating as that eating whereby unbelievers receive the body and blood of Christ without experiencing any gracious effect, but to their own detriment and condemnation. According to them, all communicants, believers and unbelievers, receive the body of Christ. Here Calvin reaffirms his statement that while the body of Christ is offered to all, it is one thing to offer and another thing to receive. Faith is necessary, for, as Augustine says, " Men carry no more from the Sacrament than they bring in the vessel of faith." That is why unbelievers turn empty away, and do not receive the precious gift offered to them (Sect. 33).

In short, Calvin claims that on this head the teaching of Augustine is in entire harmony with his own.

According to the " holy doctor," the virtue of the Sacrament, *i.e.*, the body itself from which this virtue is inseparable, is imparted to those who participate with the heart. The visible Sacrament, on the other hand, is received by those who eat the Sacrament with the teeth. The unbeliever does not participate in the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Augustine distinguishes between *Sacramental* and *Real* eating which is spiritual, and takes place by faith, just as one distinguishes between the sacraments and their virtue, between the sign and the thing signified. The *Sacramental* Eating, which is the eating of the visible

sign, is quite different from the *Spiritual* Eating, which is that of the body of Christ. "The other disciples ate bread which was the Lord. Judas ate the bread of the Lord" (Homil. in Joann, 62). "To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, is to dwell in Him. Whoever dwells in Christ, eats His body and drinks His blood. But he who does not dwell in Christ, *i.e.*, the unbeliever, eats Him sacramentally; that is to say, does not eat Him at all." "Do not prepare your throat," says Augustine, "but your heart. We receive a small portion, but the heart is filled. It is not therefore that which is seen, but that which is believed, that feeds."¹ In conclusion, Calvin would say, that since the body of Christ cannot be separated from its virtue, unbelievers who repel this virtue, although it may be offered to them, do not eat truly and really, but sacramentally, the body of Christ. This, of course, does not destroy the mystery of the Supper, as God always offers His grace, which grace is Christ (Sect. 34).

C

Calvin has so far been refuting the "high" views of the Roman Catholics and Luther. He now proceeds to discuss another erroneous conception—the "low" view of those who hold that to eat the body and to drink the blood of Christ is nothing more than to believe in Him.

"It seems that the Lord Himself wished to express more than that," says Calvin, "for He enjoins on us the eating of His body" (Sects. 5, 6). He wishes us to feed our souls on His flesh and blood. The eating and faith are not one and the same thing, but the first is the result of the second. There is no eating of the body of Christ, unless there is first faith, and there is not between the eating and faith a relation of identity, but a relation of causality. The eating of the body of the Lord has faith for its cause. "Like them," adds Calvin, "we understand the words of the Institution in a figurative sense, but we affirm besides, that with the sign of the body, we receive the true substance of the body."

In the Holy Supper there is a gift, a communication of Jesus Christ Himself. To contemplate by faith alone

¹ *Contra Faustum*, book 13, chap. 16.

does not give eternal life to the soul, but rather to feed this soul with the body and blood of Christ, to see that Christ becomes ours (Sects. 5 and 11).

IV

Having thus discussed the views of the Lord's Supper which he holds to be erroneous, Calvin proceeds in two succeeding sections to note the practical duties which are implied in the use and observance of the Lord's Supper. These are similar in nature to those we have already spoken of in our analysis of the *De Coena Domini*.

I. The Lord's Supper exhorts us to *Thanksgiving and Praise*. "Since in His divine goodness the Lord assures us by this mystery of great benefits, as if He made us touch them with the finger, He exhorts us by the same to be grateful to Him for them; to celebrate a gift so precious by our thanksgiving; and to exalt His goodness by our praises" (Sects. 37, 38).

II. *Proclamation and Confession of our Lord's death*. Christ commands us to recall His death, to celebrate the memory of it, to show it forth, until He come. That is to say, we have to confess publicly that by it we have life.

III. *Purity and Holiness of character and conduct*.

IV. *Charity and brotherly Fellowship and Mutual Love*. As we participate in the same symbol of the body of Christ, and unite with Him to form one body, we should be united amongst ourselves. There must be no hatred nor division. Augustine calls this Sacrament the "bond of charity." Christ in presenting Himself to us invites us by His example to devote ourselves mutually to each other. Inasmuch as He makes Himself common to all, He makes us all to be one in Him. What stronger stimulus could be employed to exhort us to mutual charity than this?

V. THE RIGHT USE OF THE SUPPER

It results from these exhortations that, in order to take a true part in the Sacrament of the Supper, a man should duly *examine* himself. "For this reason, let each individual descend into himself to know if seriously, with firm and living faith, he acknowledges Jesus Christ as his

Saviour, his righteousness, and his life. Unbelievers who rush forward to seize the Lord's Supper do not at all discern the Lord's Body. Not having any spark of faith, not believing that in Christ is their life, they repel the virtue of the Holy Spirit which would unite them to their Lord. They dishonour and profane it in taking the sign of the Body" (Sect. 40, p. 434).

In order to communicate worthily, the Christian ought to be animated with a spirit of contrition. He ought to consider whether he has true charity; whether he is prepared to give himself to his brethren, and to hold himself in common with those with whom he has Christ in common; and whether he desires to cherish, defend and help them.

But as perfection is not on earth, it is not necessary to make a bugbear of the Supper, to torment consciences, and to exclude from it all who have not perfect faith and repentance. Who has no faults? We can come to the Table notwithstanding our faults, provided that we really hope in our salvation, and wish to live according to the Gospel. We can do this on condition that we do not merely condemn our faults, while always falling into them again. For true repentance is constant, resolute in its struggle against evil. With the sincere desire to cleave to the good, we can participate in the Supper. Why should it have been instituted if we had not had a faith needing to be strengthened? "If then we feel ourselves frail, let us approach the Table as sinners who humiliate themselves, in order to be exalted by Christ; who accuse themselves, in order to be vivified by Him. The Supper is to strengthen believers, and to restore sinners" (Sects. 40, 41, 142, p. 434 f.).

The celebration of the Supper should therefore be *frequent*. One has need of often reminding oneself of the death of Christ. The Christian life, enfeebled by sin and worldly influences, has need of refreshing itself anew at the springs of reconciliation with God. These springs fortify and feed the new life, and sustain and confirm faith. The bond of brotherly charity has ceaseless need of being drawn tighter, and the unity of Christians has need of being proclaimed.

"What we have hitherto written of the Sacrament," says

Calvin, "abundantly shows that it was not instituted to be received once a year, and that perfunctorily, . . . but that all Christians might have it in frequent use, and frequently call to mind the sufferings of Christ, thereby sustaining and confirming their faith, cherishing and testifying towards each other that mutual charity, the bond of which they see in the unity of the body of Christ. As often as we communicate in the symbol of our Saviour's body, we mutually bind ourselves the one to the other, as if by a pledge, to all the offices of love" (Sect. 44, p. 437).

CALVIN AND HESSHUSS ¹

Calvin's last tract on the subject of the Lord's Supper was published against Hesshuss in January 1561. Tilemann Hesshuss, one of the zealots of that period, affords us in his life an image of that unquiet time. He is a most curious and fantastic figure, described by Calvin as a "monkey clothed in gold and accoutred in silk, more rude and barbarous than all the rabble of the monks."² "The life of this theologian," says the *Allgemeine Encyclopaedia*,³ "gives us a faithful and valuable picture of the quarrelsome spirit and the dogmatic narrowness which dominated this age of the Protestant Church." "Planck and Heppe give him a bad character, and charge him with inordinate ambition and avarice. He was one of the most pugnacious and energetic champions of Scholastic orthodoxy, who 'outluthered' Luther and 'outpoped' the Pope. He identified piety with orthodoxy, and orthodoxy with a theory which has been characterised as 'illocal con-in-substantiation' or 'bread worship,' to use Melanchthon's expression."⁴ He occupied many influential positions, but with his turbulent disposition he stirred up strife everywhere, and was himself no less than seven times deposed from office. He was originally a pupil and table companion of Melanchthon, and agreed with his moderate

¹ Langereau, *Théorie de Calvin sur la Cène, d'après ses controverses avec Westphal et Heshusius*, p. 4.

² *Tracts*, ii. p. 503.

³ *Allgemeine Encyclopaedia*, Article "Hesshuss."

⁴ Schaff, *Swiss Ref.* ii. p. 672.

opinions, but like Westphal and Flacius, he became an ungrateful enemy of his benefactor. He was recommended by him to a professorship at Heidelberg and the superintendency of the Lutheran Church in the Palatinate on the Rhine. Here he first appeared as a champion of the strict Lutheran theory of the substantial presence, and attacked the "Sacramentarians" in a book on "The presence of the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper." He quarrelled with his colleagues, especially with Deacon Klebitz, who was a Melanchthonian, but no less violent and pugnacious. He even tried to wrest the Eucharistic cup from him at the altar. He excommunicated him because he would not admit the *In* and *Sub*, but only the *Cum pane et vino* in the Scholastic formula of the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence. The Elector, Frederick III., restored peace by dismissing both Hesshuss and Klebitz (September 16th, 1559), with the approval of Melanchthon. He afterwards ordered the preparation of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, which is the best existing expression of the Calvin-Melanchthon doctrine of the Lord's Supper. On the other hand, the Lutheran clergy of Wurtemberg, under the hand of Brenz, in a Synod at Stuttgart, gave the doctrine of ubiquity which Luther had taught, but which Melanchthon had rejected, symbolical authority for Wurtemberg.¹

Calvin received the book of Hesshuss from Bullinger, who advised him to answer the arguments, but to avoid personalities.²

In the early months of 1561 the answer appeared—*De vera participatione carnis et sanguinis Christi in sacra coena ad discutiendas Heshusii nebulas*. In 1562 Hesshuss brought out his *Defensio . . . adversum calumnias Calvinii*. Calvin did not reply, and the polemic stopped.

In *De vera participatione* there is a repetition of the arguments used against Westphal. Hesshuss, however, differed from Westphal in some points of doctrine. Calvin proved this clearly in his writing. Westphal had declared that the body of Christ is masticated with the teeth. Hesshuss insisted, on the contrary, that it may be eaten with the mouth, but not touched with the teeth. He was altogether

¹ Planck, *op. cit.* v. part. ii. p. 383 f.

² Schaff, *Swiss Ref.* ii. p. 673.

opposed to the grosser idea. He also rejected the doctrine of ubiquity, and found fault with its introduction into the Formula of Concord (1577). He strongly maintained the literal eating of Christ's body by unbelievers as well as by believers. Calvin reiterates and confirms his own theory, supporting his arguments from the Scriptures and from the Fathers. He shows all his wonted intellectual vigour, and "seasons it with pepper and salt."¹

In the introduction to his work, he makes a most touching allusion to his departed friend Melancthon, and in general he reviews the whole subject matter of the controversy, and expresses his hearty goodwill to promote peace and unity. He gives at the same time a brief abstract of the points on which the two parties are agreed. He thus places the whole question in the clearest light.

DE VERA PARTICIPATIONE: THE BEST METHOD OF OBTAINING CONCORD

"That no doubt or suspicion may hinder concord, we now explain what are the points on which we are agreed; for those points which, at the commencement of our contests, chiefly exasperated the minds of both parties, are now undisputed.

"What produced the greatest hatred, was the allegation by one party that the grace of the Spirit was tied down to external elements; and by the other, that only bare and empty figures . . . were left" (*Tracts*, ii. p. 573). This contention has now ceased.

It is now acknowledged on both sides—

I. That the Sacraments are not only marks of outward profession before men, but are testimonies and badges of divine grace, and seals of the promises, giving a stronger confirmation to the truth of our faith.

II. Their use is twofold—to sustain our consciences before God, and to testify our piety before the world.

III. God is faithful and true, and performs by the secret virtue of His Spirit that which He figures by external signs, and, accordingly, on the part of God Himself, not empty

¹ Langereau, *op. cit.* p. 9.

signs are set before us, but the reality and efficacy at the same time conjoined with them.

IV. On the other hand, the grace or virtue of the Spirit is not enclosed by the external signs, because they do not profit all equally or indiscriminately, nor does the effect also appear at the same moment; but God uses the Sacraments, as to Him seems good, so that they help forward the salvation of the elect, and instead of conferring anything on the other, rather turn to their destruction.

V. The Sacraments are thus of no avail, unless they are received by faith, not depending on the earthly elements. External helps are only added to meet the weakness of our capacity.

Articles in regard to the Lord's Supper in which there is agreement—

I. Under the symbols of bread and wine, an exhibition of the body and blood is held forth; and we are not merely reminded that Christ was once offered on the Cross for us, but that sacred union is ratified to which it is owing that His death is our life. In other words, being ingrafted into His body, we are truly nourished by it, just as our bodies are nourished by meat and drink.

II. Christ fulfils in reality and efficaciously whatever the analogy between the sign and the thing signified demands. Therefore, in the Supper, communion with the body and blood is truly offered to us. Under the bread and wine, we receive an earnest which makes us partakers of the body and blood of Christ.

The following are the *Articles as to which agreement has not yet been reached—*

I. THE DISPUTE AS TO THE MODE OF EATING

(*Tracts*, ii. p. 574).

Calvin asserts, *First*, that Christ becomes ours, in order that He may thereafter communicate the blessings which He possesses to us.

Second, Christ's body was not only once given for our salvation, but is daily given us for nourishment, that while

He dwells in us we may enjoy a participation in all His blessings.

Third, Christ's body is vivifying, because he infuses His own life into us in the same way in which we derive vigour from the substance of the bread. This is accomplished through the incomprehensible agency of His Spirit.

II. THE DISPUTE AS TO THE UBIQUITY OF THE BODY

Calvin asserts that the body of Christ is finite and contained in heaven.

"The idea that there is no absurdity in supposing the body of Christ to be everywhere, in consequence of its being united to the Divinity, is easily disposed of. For although the two natures form the one Person of the Mediator, the properties of each remain distinct, since union is a different thing from unity. There was no dispute in ancient times as to this matter, for it was held with universal consent, that as Christ, the Son of God . . . was once received into heavenly glory, so He is separated from us in respect of His flesh by distance of space, but still, by his divine essence and virtue, and also spiritual grace, He fills heaven and earth" (*Tracts*, ii. p. 576).

III. THE DISPUTE AS TO THE TWOFOLD BODY

"The condition of Christ's flesh was indeed changed, when it was received into celestial glory. Whatever was terrene, mortal or perishable, it now put off. Still, it must be maintained that no other body can be vivific for us, or may be counted meat indeed, save that which was crucified to atone for our sins. The same body, then, which the Son of God offered once to the Father, He offers daily in the Supper, for our spiritual food. . . . It is not necessary, however, that the essence of the flesh should descend from heaven, in order that we may be fed upon it, for the power of the Spirit is sufficient to penetrate all impediments, and to surmount all local distance. At the same time, we do not deny that the Mode here is incomprehensible to human thought, for flesh naturally could neither be the life of the soul, nor exert its power upon us from heaven. . . . In the

sacred Supper then, we acknowledge it a miracle, transcending both nature and our own understanding that Christ's life is made common to us with Himself, and His flesh given to us as aliment. Only let all comments be kept at a distance, such as . . . the ubiquity of the body, or its secret inclusion under the symbol of the bread, or its substantial presence upon the earth " (*Tracts*, ii. p. 577).

IV. THE DISPUTE AS TO THE WORD "SUBSTANCE"

"To remove this dispute, we must remove the gross imagination as to the eating of the flesh as if it were similar to corporeal food. This absurdity being removed, there is no reason why we should deny that we are *substantially* fed on the flesh of Christ, because we are truly united into one body with Him by faith, and so made one with Him. Whence it follows that we are conjoined with Him by a substantial fellowship, just as substantial vigour flows from the head to its members. The explanation to be adopted will thus be, that substantially we become partakers of the flesh of Christ—not that any carnal mixture takes place, or that the flesh of Christ brought down from Heaven penetrates into us, or is swallowed by the mouth, but because the flesh of Christ, in respect of its *power and efficacy*, vivifies our souls in the same way that bread and wine nourish our bodies " (*Tracts*, ii. p. 577).

V. THE DISPUTE AS TO THE WORD "SPIRITUAL"

"Many are averse to the word 'spiritually,' because they think it implies something imaginary or empty. On the contrary, however, the body of Christ is said to be given to us 'spiritually' in the Supper, because the *secret energy of the Holy Spirit* causes things that are separated by local distance to be joined together, so that life is made to reach into us from Heaven out of the flesh of Christ. This power and faculty of vivifying might be said to be something abstracted from the substance, provided that it be distinctly understood that the body of Christ remains in Heaven, and that yet, while we are pilgrims on the earth, life flows and comes to us from its substance " (*Tracts*, ii. p. 578).

VI. THE DISPUTE AS TO THE WORD "FAITH"

"Some are suspicious as to the word 'faith,' as if it overthrew the reality and the effect. But we ought to view it far otherwise, viz., that the only way in which we are conjoined to Christ is by raising our minds above the world. Accordingly, the bond of our union with Christ is faith, which raises us upwards, and casts its anchor in Heaven, so that instead of subjecting Christ to the figments of our reason, we seek Him above in His glory."

VII. THE DISPUTE AS TO BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS

"Christ offers His body and blood to all in general, but as unbelievers bar the entrance of His liberality, they do not receive what is offered. It must not, however, be inferred from this, that when they reject what is given, they either make void the grace of Christ, or detract in any way from the efficacy of the Sacrament. The Supper does not, through their ingratitude, change its nature, nor does the bread, considered as an earnest or pledge given by Christ, become profane, so as not to differ at all from common bread. It still truly testifies Communion with the Flesh and Blood of Christ" (*Tracts*, ii. p. 579).

That is the conclusion of Calvin's last deliverance on the vexed subject of the Lord's Supper. For the rest, he handed his opponent, Hesshuss, over to Beza, who answered the "Defence" of Hesshuss with two sharp and learned tracts. We have in this "*Best method of obtaining Concord*" Calvin's final summing up of the question. It is the essence of his thought.

And now, to further concentrate the matter, we set down six propositions which express the main points of his Eucharistic doctrine.

Calvin's Teaching on the Lord's Supper in a series of Propositions—

I. The body of Christ is in heaven. Christ cannot therefore be bodily present in the Supper, but He is effectually present in His power (*Virtus*), even as the sun is present with us through its power, although located in the distant heavens.

II. The flesh and blood are not manducated, nor is there to be supposed any transfusion or admixture of the substance of Christ. The bread and wine are signs, but exhibitivè signs of the presence of Christ.

III. To feed on Christ is, however, more than a moral apprehension of the truth of Christ ; more than a quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, convincing and enlightening the mind through the Word, and producing the new life of regeneration in the soul. Christ, though in heaven, yet in the fulness of His personality, embracing body and soul, vivifies and nourishes the believer, including body and soul.

IV. Faith grafts us into the mystical body of Christ, which derives all its life from Him, the Head, flowing out into the members. This union is mystical, but real.

V. The Lord's Supper by its symbolical elements of bread and wine sets forth the truth of the Person of Christ, as the life and nourishment of the soul. By its symbolical actions of eating and drinking, it testifies our actual participation in Christ through the Spirit. These symbols are more than pictures or attestations. They not only signify and seal, but so exhibit and apply the reality, that there is a distinct spiritual effect.

VI. The Holy Spirit is the bond. He so acts that the substance of Christ's flesh and blood, though in heaven, affects the whole man. The influence is spiritual and real. The signs signify realities.

CHAPTER XV

THE RELATION OF CALVIN'S DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER TO THAT OF ZWINGLI

WHEN the question is raised, whether Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper is nearer to that of Luther or to that of Zwingli, the decision is usually given in favour of the latter alternative. The standpoint of this work is that Calvin's doctrine is the natural development of that of Zwingli.

We have claimed for the latter a richer conception of the Supper than is usually credited to him, and we have tried to show that in his earlier and later periods he had many points of contact with the Calvinistic theory. Seeberg, who, as we have seen, still holds the traditional view of Zwingli's doctrine, finds a greater affinity between Luther and Calvin than between Calvin and Zwingli.¹ Our thesis is, that the theories of Calvin and Luther are very closely related, but that does not preclude the possibility that Calvin was also akin to Zwingli in his views.

A. Schweizer,² Hagenbach,³ Thomasius⁴ are clearly of this opinion.

Now, while we have ample sources of information as to Luther's judgment of Zwingli's doctrine, Calvin's utterances on the same subject are meagre and scanty. We know, however, that he was far from accepting Luther's unfavourable verdict. He tells us in the Second Defence against Westphal that at first, influenced by Luther, he had a certain distrust of Zwingli. "When I read in Luther that Oekolam-

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 607.

² Schweizer, *Glaubenslehre der Evan. Ref. Kirche*, ii. p. 656.

³ Hagenbach, *Dogmengeschichte*, p. 556.

⁴ Thomasius, *Dogmengeschichte*, ii. p. 550 f.

padius and Zwingli left nothing in the Supper but bare symbols, and representations, I confess that that rather turned me against their books, and for a long time I abstained from reading them." ¹ Referring to certain retractions of Bucer, he says in a letter to Zebedee of May 19, 1539, "Please heaven, that Zwingli had done the same! His opinion was false and pernicious. When I saw that many of our people enthusiastically acclaimed it, I, living still in France (*adhuc agens in Gallia*), did not hesitate to attack it." ² This proves that in 1534 at least Calvin was still an anti-Zwinglian. But the most characteristic passage is that where, in a letter to Farel of February 27th, 1540, he says, "Excellent men are irritated if one dares to place Luther above Zwingli, as if the Gospel would perish, as soon as one disagrees in any way with him. For if one compares the two, you will know how Luther stands supreme (*quanto intervallo Lutherus excellat*)." ³ In short, one can say with Doumergue, that there was more sympathy between Calvin and Luther than between the two Reformers of Switzerland. It was an affinity of two mystical spirits. Perhaps that also explains the sentiments Calvin expressed to Viret, September 11th, 1542. "On the question of Zwingli's writings, you can think as you please. For my part, I have not read them. It may be that at the end of his life, he retracted and corrected what he said rashly at the beginning. But in his first writings, I remember how profane was his doctrine of the Sacraments." ⁴

Calvin evidently never did full justice to Zwingli. We do not see, however, that that prejudiced him with the Zurichers, for if he placed Luther incomparably above Zwingli, he placed the Zurichers infinitely above the Lutherans. "The former had taken all that was good in Zwingli's doctrine of the Supper, but the latter cleaved to all that was bad in Luther's theory." ⁵ We think that this is a very correct estimate, and it bears out our thesis. Calvin had little difficulty in acting with Bullinger in the Consensus Tigurinus, but he was steadfast in his opposition to Westphal, who insisted on some of the minor issues of Luther's doctrine. The Consensus Tigurinus was the

¹ *Tracts*, ii. p. 252.

³ Doumergue, *op. cit.* ii. p. 568 f.

² Herminjard, v. p. 317.

⁴ Herminjard, viii. p. 123 f.

natural development of Zwingli's teaching. It may be Calvinistic in thought and Zwinglian in language, but it would have been impossible for Calvin to unite with people who denied the presence of the living Christ in the Sacrament. Seeberg¹ considers that Zwingli denied that living presence. Dorner² is of opinion that he affirmed it. "That Zwingli thinks of Christ as present is undeniable. He was at this feast, Host and Banquet Food." This is borne out by his last word on the subject of the Supper. In the Confession to King Francis I. we read, "We believe that Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper; yea, that there is no communion without such presence. We believe that the true body of Christ is eaten in the Communion, not in a gross and carnal manner, but in a sacramental and spiritual manner, by the religious, believing, and pious heart."³

This passage, like many in his earlier writings, comes so near the Calvinistic view that it can hardly be distinguished from it. It is true, of course, that Zwingli in his polemical writings laid so much stress upon the absence of Christ's body that the positive truth of Christ's spiritual presence was not sufficiently emphasised. Perhaps Loofs is right, who considers that Bucer was the connecting link between Zwingli and Calvin, as Calvin was the connecting link between Luther and Zwingli.

We have already shown that there were intimate relations subsisting between South Germany and Switzerland, and, in intercourse with Bucer at Strasbourg, Calvin may have learned to form a higher opinion of Zwingli's doctrine. Taking even the traditional view of Zwingli's theory, there were many elements in it that appealed to Calvin. He certainly speaks of the signs as *exhibitiva*, while Zwingli describes them as *representiva*, but he undoubtedly shares with Zwingli the opinion that the words of Institution were to be taken in a symbolical sense. Calvin denied with Zwingli the ubiquity of Christ's body, and agreed with him that the eternal truth about that body is that it is contained in one place—at the right hand of God (*perpetua corporis veritas, ut loco contineatur*).

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 607.

² Dorner, *op. cit.* i. p. 309.

³ Niemeyer, *Collectio Confess.* p. 71 f.

Calvin was also at one with Zwingli in what Loofs¹ describes as the *Gemeinschaft* character of the Supper, in its exhortations to mutual charity and love.

There is no doubt that Calvin laid great stress, like Zwingli, on the *sozialethische*² aspect of the Feast, and its importance for the Christian community and congregation. We do not, of course, affirm that there were not also wide differences in thought between the two Swiss Reformers on the question of the *Mode*. Zwingli does not enter into metaphysical discussions as to the meaning of "substance," like Calvin. He does not lay the same stress on Christ's Humanity or Flesh. His theory is perhaps more *historisch* than *dynamisch*.³ He makes no mention of the agency of the Holy Spirit in the Ordinance. We hear nothing of a "lifting up of the soul to heaven," as in Calvin, but in the sense of the devotional *sursum corda*, which was the sense intended by Calvin, Zwingli would not object to the exhortation.

Above all, we have to remember how rich was Zwingli's view of faith, and how much of spiritual meaning he found in it. Were we to take his teaching in his earlier and later periods along with many scattered utterances in his time of conflict with Luther, we would discover that there was very little with which Calvin would find fault. And had Luther taken the trouble to read Zwingli's writings for himself, he might have discovered that Zwingli also granted that in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper there is a gift offered to the believing soul, which confession, we have seen, was the irreducible minimum which Luther demanded in the doctrine.

¹ Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 879.

² Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 608.

³ Schultz, *op. cit.* p. 3 f.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RELATION OF CALVIN'S DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER TO THAT OF LUTHER

THE question how far Luther and Calvin agree in their teaching on the Lord's Supper, or how much they differ, has often been raised by writers on dogmatic theology. If we study the works of the older theologians on both sides, we see that all, Lutherans and Calvinists, are of opinion that there is a radical difference between the two doctrines, so great as to be almost insurmountable. The view of the older Lutherans is that it was Calvin's intention "to banish Christ entirely from the Lord's Supper. He really held that the bread and the wine were merely symbols. Calvin, however, had a cunning mind. He could cover his ideas with an orthodox veneering, and he could so represent his theory that it seemed to differ only slightly from the ordinary accepted doctrine."¹ If we take the evidence of the older Reformed writers, Luther was the innovator who brought forward consubstantiation, impanation, and other strange ideas about the Lord's Supper, much to the pious astonishment of his friends.

That was the characteristic attitude of the theologians of those early times which were so full of strife and quarrel. Later writers on both sides try to give a more impartial judgment, but even they do not seem to understand clearly the points of difference. We miss here a help which we have in the disputes between Luther, and Zwingli and Oekolampadius, about the Lord's Supper. In their controversial writings, as well as in the discussion at Marburg, the points at issue stand out clearly. Now, although the

¹ Julius Müller, *Dogmatische Abhandlungen*, p. 404, *passim*.

underlying differences between his doctrine and that of Calvin must have been well known to Luther, we do not find that he ever stated these differences clearly. Luther says in his *Kurzes Bekenntnis vom heiligen Sakrament* (1544), "I count them all in one cake, whoever will not believe that in the Holy Sacrament, the natural body of our Lord is received by the godless or Judas, as well as by a saint or a St. Peter."¹ One might conclude from these words that Luther meant Calvin in the *First Edition of the Institutes* or in the *De Coena*, in as much as in both writings he denied that an impious person may receive the body of the Lord. But it is certain that Luther does not class Calvin amongst the seven Fanatical spirits. He leaves three of the Fanatics unnamed, but his description of their doctrine does not bear any resemblance to Calvin's theory. We have already noted Pezel's story of Luther's favourable comment on the *De Coena*. "I might have left the matter of this dispute in his (Calvin's) hands. If Zwingli and Oekolampadius had declared the same opinion, we should never have had such widespread controversy."² All are not agreed as to the authenticity of this saying, but we have a true testimony in a letter of Luther addressed to Bucer, 14th October, 1539. "Salute respectfully for me J. Sturmius and J. Calvin, whose books I have read with especial pleasure."³

Calvin in a letter to Farel (20th November, 1539) says, "Just think what I have said there (in the *Institutes*) on the subject of the Supper!"⁴ If, then, we take all these utterances into account, we must conclude that Luther was not antagonistic to Calvin's doctrine, although he does not declare himself as satisfied with it. Ebrard, who has made a very careful study of this question, thinks that we can trace in Luther's opinion of Calvin's theory a gradual cooling of his verdict of approval. He begins with praise, and descends through tolerance to the utterance of a hard private judgment. It was Amsdorf who was the cause of Luther's growing suspicion of the Melancthon-Calvin doctrine. And yet he so maintained his respect for

¹ Erl. edit. 32, p. 399.

² This work, p. 149. Pezel, *op. cit.* p. 137 f.

³ De Wette, *Luthers Briefe*, v. p. 110.

⁴ Henry, *op. cit.* i. p. 167.

Melanchthon and Calvin that even Amsdorf could not drive him to an open polemical attack.¹

We now proceed to a critical comparison of Luther's and Calvin's theories of the Lord's Supper, and we arrange our discussion under a series of questions.²

I. *Are Calvin and Luther at variance in their doctrine of the Lord's Supper, because of their different conceptions of the words of Institution?*

Luther understands the words, "This is My body. This is My blood," in a sense different from the Roman Catholics. He rejects transubstantiation. As we have seen, he employs a synecdoche, and includes under the *touto* both the bread and the body of Christ, the wine and the blood of Christ.

Calvin takes these words symbolically, and by associating the "Given for you and broken for you" with the body, and the "Shed for many" with the blood, he relates the transaction to the death on the Cross, but he is quite definite in asserting that Christ really will bestow what He indicates through the breaking of the bread and the distribution of the wine.³

We can therefore say that although there is this difference in their mode of interpretation of the words of Institution, there appears as yet no difference as regards their conception of the Nature of the Heavenly Gift which is offered to the worthy communicant.

II. *Is the difference between Luther and Calvin to be found in the fact that Calvin does not attribute to the Lord's Supper a special grace and influence which cannot be otherwise obtained?*

According to Calvin, Christ, the Living Bread, sustains the new life implanted in our souls. He is in communion with us through the mysterious power of His Holy Spirit, quickening us with the Spiritual Food of His flesh and blood. This gift is for all who believe in Jesus Christ, not only at certain periods, but always. The Lord's Supper, however, provides a *peculiar* pledge of this grace and gift. This pledge is given to believers by Christ Himself in the symbols of the bread and wine.

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 478.

² J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 410 f.

³ *Institutes*, iv. chap. 17, paras. 1, 2, and 10. Kahnis, *Lutherische Dogmatik*, iii. p. 487.

According to this manner of teaching, Christ works in the Sacrament in the same way as outside the Sacrament. That this is Calvin's view we do not deny, but we assert that in reality Luther's teaching on the efficacy of the Sacrament comes to the same thing.

According to Luther, the purpose and the fruit of the Lord's Supper relate to the forgiveness of sins, which is to be appropriated by faith. This idea of the End of the Sacrament occurs frequently in his writings and sermons. It is sufficient to quote the words of the *Kurzes Katechismus*.¹ "What is the use of such eating and drinking? These words, 'Given for you and shed for the forgiveness of sins,' show us that there are given in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and blessedness."

Luther refers the words, "Given for you and shed for you," not to the coming death on the Cross, through which the forgiveness of sins would be won, but to the Sacrament itself, in which the forgiveness of sins is conferred along with the body and the blood of Christ, presented under the bread and wine. He gives to the words, "Shed for you," the meaning, "Poured out before your eyes for drinking." He says in *Wider die himmelischen Propheten*,² "The forgiveness of sins was achieved on the Cross, but it was not given or distributed there. Christ has not won the forgiveness in the Supper, but He has given and distributed it through the Word in the Gospel wherever it is preached." Luther also says, that when one has a guilty conscience, one may come to the Sacrament and receive consolation, not in the bread and wine, not in the body and blood of Christ, but in the Word which says that in the Sacrament the body and blood of Christ are offered and given for me. "Thus the fruit which they receive, who rightly use the Lord's Supper, is the most certain assurance that their sins are forgiven them, relying on the Word which accompanies the partaking of the body and blood of Jesus Christ."

The question arises now whether Luther taught that the forgiveness of sins could not be obtained otherwise than in the Lord's Supper. Luther himself furnishes the answer. "Christ has bestowed the forgiveness of sins in

¹ *Katechismus*, Weimar edit. vol. 26.

² J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 412, Weimar Edit. vol. 18.

the Lord's Supper, as also in the Gospel, wherever it is preached."

Luther had the conviction that people could obtain forgiveness of sins not only in the Sacrament, but whenever they accepted in true faith the Gospel of the grace of God, which is offered to us in the Saviour. For, whenever he mentions the means which God employs to give grace and salvation, he never names the Holy Supper alone, but sometimes the Word alone. Where, however, he sets forth his fuller meaning, he speaks of the Word and the Sacrament. He indeed ascribes all the power and efficacy of the Holy Supper, not to the objects which are eaten and drunk, and not to the transaction of eating and drinking, but to the Word of Christ, offering the forgiveness of sins.¹ Luther considers that the efficacy of the Sacrament lies not only in itself, but also in the Word of the Gospel wherever it is proclaimed. We cannot therefore say that in this he differed much from Calvin.

III. *Does the difference between Luther's and Calvin's conception of the Supper consist in the fact that Luther emphasises the objective side of the Sacrament, while Calvin emphasises the subjective side?*²

It is said that with Luther all the power and the truth of the Sacrament depend on the Word of the Institution, and on the promise connected with it. This Word effects that not only at the first Communion, but at every celebration, the body and blood of Christ are present, given and received.

Luther is thus said to stress the objective aspect of the Sacrament.

On the other hand, it is said that, according to Calvin's view, the truth of the Sacrament is a spiritual partaking of Jesus Christ, which is nothing else but the faith which embraces Christ with His merits and benefits, with the whole trust of the mind. This would be a purely subjective view. But, as Müller² points out, "It would be very strange if Calvin, who had not the reputation of a dull mind, should be so stupid as to credit Christ with giving pledges

¹ Kahnis, *Lutherische Dogmatik* ii. p. 404. *Lehre vom Abendmahl*, p. 327.

² Julius Müller *op. cit.* p. 419 f.

of a thing which is not to be effected by Him, but by those who believe in Him. Now, all who have studied Calvin's teaching know that he held no such opinion."

Calvin frequently repeats in his writings what he says in his *Institutes* (iv. chap. 17, para. 5). "There is a difference between their mode of speaking and mine. According to them, to eat is merely to believe, while I maintain that the flesh of Christ is eaten by believing. According to them, eating is faith, whereas it rather seems to me to be an effect of faith."

Calvin thinks of this spiritual partaking thus. Christ Himself acts through the mysterious power of the Holy Spirit in the souls of men, and communicates to them the eternal, heavenly life, which proceeds from His glorified body, so that they become of His flesh and of His bones (Ephes. v. 30).

Calvin is far from thinking that this most intimate communion consists in the conformity to Christ's will, or in the imitation of His virtues. He considers it a great mystery (Ephes. v. 32) which cannot be grasped. Only those who accept His promises in true faith are partakers of this union with Christ, so that the spiritual partaking of Christ depends on faith, but is not by any means identical with faith. He does not hold a merely subjective view. He believes that the Sacrament conveys an objective gift of grace.

IV. *Does the difference between Luther's and Calvin's teaching on the Lord's Supper issue from their different conceptions of this believing enjoyment?*¹

According to Luther, the substance of the Holy Supper, the body and blood of Christ (wherever the Sacrament is celebrated in the way prescribed by its Divine Founder) is at once received by all who partake of the elements, even by those who do not believe in Christ's grace and promise. For Christ has, through His Word, so closely united His body and His blood with the bread and wine that they cannot be separated from each other in the use of the Holy Supper. It is well known that Luther taught this. In the Smalkald Articles (III. Art. 6), he says that not only pious Christians, but also the wicked are offered and receive the body and blood of Christ.

¹ Julius Müller *op. cit.* p. 423.

According to Calvin, the life-giving food is presented to all, even to those who do not believe. But he attributed this importance to faith, that only those receive the food who believe. On this point he lays down the principle that Christ, in so far as He is the life-giving Bread, and the Offering made on the Cross, cannot, without His Spirit, enter into the body of man. But only believers receive His Spirit. It is false, then, to say that Calvin makes the reality of the Sacrament dependent on the faith of the receiver. Notwithstanding agreement on this point, there yet remains the distinction between Luther and Calvin that Luther considers that the unworthy also receive the substance of the Sacrament, while Calvin is of opinion that they only receive the signs of the bread and wine.

When we consider the distinction in itself, however, we need not attach great importance to it. As Müller says, "The Church has to care, not what the unworthy, but what the worthy receive."¹

Besides, Luther, like Calvin, often confesses that the sacramental partaking, without the spiritual partaking, is profitable to no one. From this, it would appear that Luther's and Calvin's views as to the communion of the unworthy do not show any very deep-seated difference in thought.

V. Does the difference between Luther's and Calvin's teaching on the Lord's Supper consist in the greater assurance of the receiving of grace which the Lutheran communicant enjoys?

"Every Lutheran who comes to the Sacrament, relying on the Word, is assured that he will partake of the body and blood of Christ.

"The Calvinist, on the other hand, is led to examine anxiously his faith and worthiness, and so is exposed to the pangs of conscience."²

This is a comparison often made to the detriment of Calvin's teaching. But when we examine the question we find that there is not much in this distinction. For they who accept Luther's teaching on the Lord's Supper, although they are assured that they will receive the sub-

¹ Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 426 f.

² *Ibid.* p. 426.

stance of the Sacrament, *i.e.*, the body and blood of Christ, have to come desiring and praying for the salutary partaking, just as the followers of Calvin do. They know that this salutary partaking is denied to the unworthy.¹

According to Luther's teaching, a more horrible evil consists in taking the Communion unworthily than in not taking it at all through the fear of being unworthy. It will therefore follow that the communicants must be most anxious about their worthiness. This worthiness, both Luther and Calvin hold, consists in repentance and faith. That the latter generally adds pre-eminently love, as well as a pure and holy life, is of no importance as a point of distinction, since Luther and the Lutherans continually do the same.

VI. *Does the difference between Luther's and Calvin's teaching on the Lord's Supper issue from their different ideas of the faith necessary for the right use of the Supper?*

We cannot conceal the fact that there is a difference in their conceptions of this faith, a difference which is somewhat obscure.

When Luther speaks of this faith which is needed for the fruitful partaking of the Supper, he understands generally, not a certain permanent conviction of the substance of the Sacrament, but the confidence that the divine grace and the forgiveness of sins are offered there. As he says in the *Kurzes Katechismus*, "He is right worthy, who has faith in these words, 'Given for you and shed for you for the remission of sins.'"²

This is also clear from the fact that Luther denies that the sacramental partaking is salutary, if the spiritual partaking is absent. By this spiritual partaking he means the faith that relies on the merits of Christ and appropriates the Living Son of God. Not in exactly the same words, but in a similar fashion, Calvin speaks of the faith which is necessary for the Sacrament. He often teaches that faith is the trust which grasps Christ,³ and His death and resurrection, and which rests on the salvation won by Christ.³

¹ Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 428.

² *Kurzes Katechismus*, Weimar Edit. vol. 26.

³ *Institutes*, book iv. chap. 17, paras. 11 and 40. Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 429 f.

For both Luther and Calvin this faith is the justifying, saving faith. But at other times Luther teaches differently about this faith, especially in his book, *Dass die Worte, das ist mein Leib noch feststehen*.¹ He denies there the reality of the Zwinglian Sacrament. He denies to the Zwinglian not merely the fruit and the effect, but even the substance. In that writing he says, "It is well and fitting that the proud and godless blasphemers be put away, so that they do not partake of the Holy Sacrament, for it is not right to cast the Holy Thing to dogs, nor pearls before swine. But now, since the Fanatics believe that it is merely bread and wine, then assuredly it is so. As they believe, so they have. They eat merely bread and wine, and enjoy the body of the Lord neither spiritually nor carnally. It is only right that our gift be not distributed to the unworthy, but remain pure and holy for the humble alone."¹

With these words he designates the faith on which the partaking of the Sacrament depends, as the orthodox recognition of the Sacrament. Some Lutheran theologians argue that Luther denied the presence of Christ at the Zwinglian Communion, only because he supposed that they did not observe it according to the words of Institution. In the *Bekennntnis vom Abendmahl* we read,² "The present enemies of the Sacrament have only bread and wine, because they have altered . . . even the words and the instituted ordinance of God." But it is obvious that this objurgation of Luther was not directed against the Zwinglian ritual, which was even stricter than the Lutheran, but against their interpretation of Christ's words. "If it be that they change the words of God and Institution, and explain it in another way." It was not the Zurich ritual to which Luther objected, but the symbolical interpretation of the words of Institution.

Calvin's teaching regarding the faith necessary for the right use of the Lord's Supper has often been explained by his opponents, *e.g.*, Hesshuss, as if he wished to exclude from the effects of the Sacrament those who have a weak faith, so that to a man of trembling conscience there would be given mere empty symbols. It will be easy to absolve Calvin

¹ Erl. edit. vol. 30, p. 95.

² Weimar edit. vol. 26.

from this "crime," as Hesshuss describes it. For (saving in the *Consensus Tigurinus*, as we have seen), whenever he makes the efficacy of the Sacrament to depend on the faith of the partaker, he does not demand a certain degree or measure of faith, but simply true and not hypocritical faith. In the *Institutes* (Bk. iv. chap. 17, para. 40) he declares only those unworthy who have not the smallest spark of faith, and those as worthy "who come as poor to a benevolent giver, sick to a physician, sinful to the author of righteousness, in fine, dead to Him Who gives life."

Calvin emphasises that the Sacraments are for the feeble and the infirm, to heal the deficiency of their faith and love. He says finely that this is the only and the best worthiness we can present to God, "If we come in meekness, so that He may show His compassion; if we humble ourselves, that He may raise us up; if we accuse ourselves, so that He may justify us."

And yet, no one who has actually read Luther's and Calvin's writings on the Lord's Supper will fail to observe that there is a difference in their conception of the faith that is requisite for the right use of the Sacrament. Luther always states that this faith rests simply on Christ's promise, and he requires the acknowledgment of the presence of the body and the blood of Christ in the Supper.

Calvin describes it as a "Lifting up of the soul to Christ in heaven," who there communicates His grace to the believing soul. Ebrard and Kahnis both quote numerous passages in this sense which might seem to teach that the influence of the Holy Ghost is of a *wunderbar* and *magisch* nature.¹ But as we have pointed out earlier in this work, by this "Lifting up of the soul to heaven" Calvin was directing believers to seek for Christ, not in the carnal elements, in the signs, but in the heavenly places, where He is enthroned at God's right hand. It might have been better, however, as Müller says, if Calvin had explained this simple thing in a less symbolical way, as it has led Planck and many others to accuse him of ambiguity and confusion of thought.²

¹ Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. p. 457 f.

² Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 433.

VII. *Does the difference in Luther's and Calvin's teaching on the Lord's Supper issue from Calvin's doctrine of Predestination?*¹

Some theologians have found the distinction between Luther's and Calvin's Eucharistic doctrine in the presence of predestinarian elements in Calvin's testimony. This contention is based on Article 16 of the *Consensus Tigurinus*, "God does not exert His power indiscriminately on all who receive the Sacraments, but only on the elect. For as He enlightens unto faith none but those whom He has fore-ordained unto life, so by the secret agency of His Spirit, He makes the elect receive what the Sacraments offer." This teaching, as we have seen, was not stressed in Calvin's polemic writings against Westphal and Hesshuss, but it was never formally withdrawn, since he considered predestination as one of his fundamental dogmas. According to this representation of Calvin's doctrine, the castaways, even if they came to the Lord's Supper fired with a most ardent desire for communion, would be cruelly scoffed at by God, and would receive only empty symbols.¹

Now, it is agreed that Luther held very much the same conception. This, at least, he had in common with Calvin, that this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was only for the benefit (*Heil*) of the elect, and that the distinction between the chosen and the castaway depended on God's decree. Leaving this aside, however, we must ask, what influence had Calvin's predestinarian doctrine on his teaching on the Lord's Supper? Those who ascribe great importance to this influence seem to hold that Calvin said that men could be saved by the Decree of God without the intervention of any other means of grace. An inner working power would lead them to everlasting life, whether they took the Sacraments or despised them. But this is a mistaken notion of Calvin's view. Calvin always taught against the Anabaptists and other "Fanatics" that God uses in the execution of His Decrees, the Word and the Sacraments as instruments, and awakens and increases by means of them repentance and faith in the elect. If a man is anxious about his eternal salvation, and if it is necessary to show

¹ J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 433 f. Hastie, *Theology of the Reformed Church*, p. 223.

him how to overcome his fears, Calvin does not tell him to seek after the secret will and counsel of God, but he constantly leads him back to the Gospel and to the Sacraments. He only adds the direction that he should not rely exclusively on the instruments, but that he should ascribe the whole work of his eternal salvation to God alone, who works where and when He pleases.

With Luther there are two categories of communicants—the *worthy*, who are armed with justifying faith, and the *unworthy*, who do not possess that faith. So with Calvin, the elect are the worthy, and the rejected are the unworthy. Calvin does not agree with Bucer, who makes a distinction between the unworthy and the godless. No one can prove that Calvin allows the elect to benefit by the Sacrament before they attain to a state of faith. On the contrary, in the first words of the chapter on the Lord's Supper in his *Institutes*, he rejects this opinion.

And if Calvin seems to think that men, who at one time took the Communion without benefit, because they were without faith, may afterwards, when awakened from their sleep, derive blessings from the Supper, we must not forget that Luther's teaching lost some of its severity in its distinction between the worthy and unworthy guests. Luther allows that for all those who unworthily partake of the Lord's Supper, and later, through the grace of God, become worthy partakers of it, their former unworthy partaking will not lead to their condemnation. We find, therefore, on this point no important divergence between the teaching of Calvin and Luther.¹

From our enquiry, we find that, so far Luther and Calvin seem to be in accord as to the *Effect* of the Sacrament.

Even theologians of high standing in the Lutheran Church do not deny this. According to Martin Chemnitz, "About the virtue, efficacy, use, and fruit of the Sacrament, there is no dispute. About these, we are all agreed."² This accord does not only concern the beneficial effect, but also the effect on those who take the Sacrament unworthily.

¹ Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 438.

² Chemnitz, *De fundamentis sacrae coenae*, chap. iii. Cologne, 1561.

Luther warns those who take the Sacrament unworthily that they will meet with great difficulties (*Schwierigkeiten*), but he does not mention what these difficulties will be. He only repeats the assertion of St. Paul that the unworthy partakers sin against the body and blood of our Lord, and that they will be judged for this, but he does not say what punishment they will receive.¹

In this respect, there is no indication of any important difference between the teachings of Calvin and Luther. For the former regards the effect of the Sacrament on those who partake unworthily as entirely analogous to the consequences which flow from knowing but despising the Word of God. Calvin says, "We nowhere read that they bring death upon themselves by receiving Christ unworthily, but by rejecting Him."² He tells us that the despising of God's Word brings damnation to no one who does not understand it, and he thinks in the same manner of the Lord's Supper. The Apostle does not pronounce judgment on those who do not come at all to the Table of the Lord, but on those who have heard the words of Institution and promise, and who must, therefore, have a notion, however obscure, of the meaning of the Supper, and who are yet not afraid to pollute it through their lack of reverence.

We can therefore say that there are many points of agreement between Calvin and Luther as to the *effect* of the Lord's Supper, but we shall find that they have different views as to the *substance* of the Sacrament.

THE SUBSTANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

If we regard the matter in a general way, it might seem that Calvin has the same view of the substance as Luther.

Calvin says sometimes that Christ is the substance of the Supper, and he often says that the flesh and blood of Christ are offered us in the Sacrament. We recall such expressions as these: "Christ gives us His own body and blood in the Lord's Supper," "He nourishes us with His flesh," "He makes us partakers of His flesh," and so forth. At other times, however, he seems to deny the presence of the flesh of Christ in the Sacrament. In the *Institutes* (Book IV.

¹ J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 439 f.

² *Institutes*, iv. chap. 17, para. 33.

chap. 17, para. 30) he rejects the dogma of the carnal presence as an insipid invention, but his words have to be carefully examined. He does not deny the presence of the flesh of Christ in the Supper. On the contrary, he is convinced that it *is* present, but he wishes it to be understood, not in a carnal but in a spiritual way. There need be no suspicion that he chose those expressions in order to approach the Lutheran doctrine. His dogmatic principles compelled him to take account of the glorified nature of Christ, and, therefore, of His glorified flesh and blood. For, in Calvin's opinion, the glorified body of Christ intervenes in a certain way between the divine nature of Christ and the believer, so that it conveys to his soul the divine efficacy and power. Indeed, he attributes to the divine flesh of Christ a special life-giving power.¹ If it seems strange to some to ascribe flesh and blood to the ascended and glorified body of Christ, we have to remember that Luther as well as Calvin ascribed flesh and blood to the body of Christ even after its ascension. Notwithstanding this apparent agreement as to the substance of the Lord's Supper, there is yet a difference in the views of Calvin and Luther as to the connection between the substance and the effect of the Sacrament.²

(a) *Calvin brings the substance and the effect into much closer connection than Luther.*

According to Calvin, the one cannot be separated from the other. Nobody can partake of the substance without experiencing the salutary effect.

According to Luther, a separation between the substance and the effect may take place in the case of the unworthy, who partake of the substance, without obtaining the benefit intended by Christ.

With the above-mentioned difference in conception there is another nearly allied.

(b) *Luther makes a closer union than Calvin of the substance of the Lord's Supper and its symbols.*

According to Luther, anyone who receives the symbols receives also the substance, whereas Calvin believes that the unworthy receive the symbols without the substance.³

¹ *Institutes*, iv. chap. 17, paras. 8 and 9.

² J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 442.

³ J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 443 f.

According to Luther, Christ communicates the presence of His flesh and blood in the Lord's Supper to the bread and wine, in order that He may communicate it to those who partake of the signs.

According to Calvin, Christ does not communicate the presence of His body and blood to the bread and wine, but to the souls of men, so that the use of bread and wine, as appointed by Christ, is a symbol and pledge of that hidden fellowship with Christ. For, that Christ comes down into the bread and wine, Calvin steadfastly denies. But that He comes into men's souls, he steadfastly maintains.

Luther says that Christ gives Himself not merely *with* the bread and wine, but *in* and *under* the bread and wine.

Calvin says that believers receive the body and blood of Christ, as they receive the signs.

(c) From this there arises another difference between Calvin and Luther.

Luther teaches that we receive Christ with the same organ that we receive the bread and wine—that is, with the mouth; while Calvin thinks that we receive the symbols with the mouth, but the body of Christ with faith, as the mouth of the soul.

CALVIN'S CONCEPTION OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER IN CONTRAST WITH LUTHER'S

Calvin teaches that the body, or, as he is accustomed to call it, the flesh of the Lord (John vi.), is the substance of the Sacrament, in that from it a quickening power comes down into the souls of believers. We have seen that he often uses phrases like these: "To feed our souls on the substance of the flesh," "This substance is heavenly food," "We are joined in substantial union with Christ," and so forth. By such expressions he means to say that that quickening power (*Virtus*) proceeds neither from our faith, nor from the Word of the Gospel, nor from the Holy Spirit, but in a mysterious way from the substance of the glorified flesh of Christ.

He denies categorically that this substance can be commingled with the bodies of the believers or with their souls, for the flesh of Christ is contained in heaven until the

day of Judgment. Therefore, it cannot be present on earth, according to its substance. He explains it more exactly in words like these: "Life flows into us from the substance of the flesh and blood of Christ; we receive life from the substance of the flesh and blood of Christ; Christ breathes His own life out of the substance of His flesh into our souls; Christ pours the vivifying energy of His flesh into us."

Calvin's conception of "substance," as Professor Lindsay¹ has pointed out, contains the root of his theory. Out of the human nature of Christ, now exalted in divine glory, or, to put it in Calvin's words, out of His flesh, there flows a peculiar, quickening power into the souls of believers on partaking of the Lord's Supper, so that they become united with their Divine Head in the closest way.

Luther also makes the body of Christ the substance of the Lord's Supper, but he denies to it this quickening energy ascribed to it by Calvin. Luther could not do otherwise, since he grants this substance of the Sacrament also to the unworthy.²

This feature of Calvin's theory has led Lutheran theologians, old and new, to attribute to him an ambiguity of thought. They are accustomed to complain that he confuses the substance of the Lord's Supper and its efficacy. As a matter of fact, Calvin could not separate the two, since to him the *divine substance of the Sacrament and its quickening energy are one and the same thing*.

From the above elucidation of the relative teaching of Luther and Calvin we already see that we must make some modification of Chemnitz's dictum that there is between Calvin and Luther no difference in conception as to the virtue, efficacy, use, and fruit of the Sacrament.

Calvin asserts that the quickening energy of the glorified flesh of Christ, whence arises the mystical union of believers with Him, and their engrafting into His life, is not only assured to them in the Lord's Supper, but is also communicated to them for the nourishing, increasing, and strengthening of that union.

Does Luther teach that this engrafting into Christ's life is the direct effect of the Holy Supper?

¹ Lindsay, *History of the Ref.* ii. p. 59. This work, p. 208.

² Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 446.

In Luther we find a similar thought only in these passages in which he teaches that the Resurrection of our body is effected by the communication of the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper.¹

This view, as we have seen, Luther afterwards abandoned, and it can be readily recognised why he did not designate the nourishing and increasing of the mystical union with Christ as the end and effect of the Supper. According to Calvin, the quickening energy of that divine flesh penetrates into the souls of believers, whereas, according to Luther, Christ gives His flesh through the bodily mouth to the unworthy as well as to the worthy. Seeing then that all receive the flesh, the unworthy would perforce receive the nourishing and increasing of the mystical union. This, of course, would be absurd, and impossible to maintain. Luther makes no such claims for the body and blood of Christ. He teaches, on the contrary, that the flesh and blood of Christ are given as a token of the forgiveness of sins. This token is given to all who receive the Sacrament, but while for the believer it provides a most precious assurance, it works to the detriment of the profane and unworthy, through their own negligence and contempt.

If we now seek to make a final comparison of their teaching on this point, we find that, according to Calvin, the Substance of the Sacrament is a vitalising energy which proceeds from the glorified flesh of Christ and flows into our souls.²

Luther, on the other hand, believes that the divine substance of the Lord's Supper consists not in the power and efficacy of the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, but in this body and this blood itself. He says of this substance, that whenever the Holy Communion is partaken of, according to the Institution of Christ (*i.e.*, in a Church which teaches Christ's presence), the substance is in closest union with the bread and wine.

This distinction drawn between the substance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and the quickening power which proceeds from it, is really the fundamental difference between the views of Luther and Calvin in the question of the Supper.

¹ J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 447.

² *Ibid.* p. 448.

Calvin maintains against Hesshuss that there was no dispute about the substantial presence, nor about the substantial partaking, but only about the *mode* and *manner*.¹ Similar expressions are often found in his writings and in those of his followers. It seems to have escaped even his keen intellect that the different views as to the mode had really their ground in the fact that he and Luther had different ideas of what is present and distributed in the Lord's Supper to the believing soul. For Calvin denied, as we have seen, that the substance of the glorified Christ is present in the Lord's Supper. He maintained that Christ is present by the life-giving power which proceeds from His flesh, and is efficacious in the believing soul.

Luther, on the contrary, maintained that the substance of the body and blood of Christ Himself is distributed and received in the Holy Supper.

This is the secret of the difference in view between Luther and Calvin. If we consider the revised version of Luther's teaching of 1528 onwards, we find that he holds that what is given in, with, and under the bread is not a living, active thing (*agens*), which, from its nature, influences, moves, and transforms those who receive it. It is a thing which may be treated reverently or profanely, according to the free will of the communicant. For this divine thing is, through the will and word of Christ, so closely united with the visible elements that it cannot be separated from them in the partaking of the Holy Supper.

And as the visible elements may be handled in a holy or in a profane manner, so this heavenly thing has subjected itself to the free will of the communicant.

In reply to Oekolampadius, who said that "He must be a fine king who allows His body to be thrown about the altar by wicked fellows," Luther defends his opinions in this ingenious way. "The honour of our Lord resides in this, that He lowered Himself in the flesh for our sake . . . that He suffered Himself to be treated disgracefully (*unehrlich*) on the Cross and on the altar."²

To Luther, then, what is present as a pledge is a *res animata*, but not *agens*.

¹ *Tracts*, ii. p. 506. J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 457.

² Weimer edit. vol. 23. Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 460 f.

According to Calvin's teaching, what is communicated to the Christian in the Lord's Supper is not merely a living thing, but an active, life-giving thing (*agens*).

As Schneckenburger says, "Calvin holds that the Christ communicated in the Lord's Supper is in no other manner present than as the Communicator (*Mittheilende*)."¹

According to Ebrard, the difference in Luther's and Calvin's teaching is the difference between the *substantia in substantia* and the *actus in actu*.² And, as this life-giving thing concerns only the spiritual life, it therefore cannot be distributed with the bread and wine, or partaken of with the mouth. It penetrates directly into the soul without any intermediary. This life-giving thing which is continually acting and nourishing and increasing the spiritual life of man cannot be received by those whose hearts have not been opened by faith. It cannot be received as a thing of common use. It is not possessed by men, but it possesses men. It cannot be treated well or badly by them, but it moves, inspires, and changes men. It is an *agens*.

This life-giving force proceeds from the glorified flesh of Christ in such a way that it is the instrument or the channel through which Christ, the God Man, gives His life to man. This communication, although it is continual, reaches its summit when Christ makes us partakers of His life-giving flesh and blood in the Sacrament. Although this communication consists in action, operation, and animation, one can nevertheless say that those who worthily partake of the Lord's Supper are eating the flesh of Christ. For these and similar expressions mean that this life-giving force is received in the inner man, in the secrecy of the soul.³ Melancthon, in a communication to Theodore Vitus, expresses surprise that learned men for so many centuries, in treating of the Lord's Supper, have not thought of the distinction which subsists between an *agens liberum* (a freely-acting agent) and a *res animata* (an animated thing).⁴

¹ Schneckenburger, *Die orthodoxe Lehre*, p. 151.

² Ebrard, *op. cit.* ii. pp. 458 and 525. Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 462, note.

³ Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 643. ⁴ *Corpus Reform*, Tom. v. p. 208.

In these words Melanchthon has touched the principal point of difference between Calvin's and Luther's teaching on the subject of the Lord's Supper.

To Calvin, Christ is present as an *agens liberum*.

To Luther, Christ is present as a *res animata*.

We cannot conclude our inquiry without touching on some fluctuations of opinion through which the teaching of the one appears to approach the doctrine of the other.

If we examine Calvin's teaching, we can detect no fluctuations of any importance. As he defined it at the beginning, in the *Institutes* of 1536 and in the *De Coena* of 1540, he maintained it all his life. He may have used expressions at times which seemed to reduce the divergence between Luther's teaching and his own. He says frequently in his early and in his later writings, "Christ gives the true substance of His body and His blood in the Supper," "Christ truly quickens our souls with the substance of His flesh and blood."¹

But he never neglects to explain clearly the meaning of these expressions. We do not, of course, assert that Calvin's teaching needs no rectification. There may be necessary elements lacking in his testimony, and we shall discuss certain apparent ambiguities when we come to speak of the consistency of his theory. Nevertheless, we affirm that the different parts of his doctrine are fixed in such an absolute way, and are related so closely to one another, that any modification or completion by the more exact definition of what is obscure, or by the addition of what seems to be wanting, is much more difficult than the further development of Luther's teaching.²

We now proceed to a final glance at that teaching.

We have already made clear that, according to Luther's judgment, the divine gift of the Holy Supper is a thing which is subordinated to the partaker, and we have stated his grounds for this opinion. The communion of the unworthy seems to have forced him to this view. But we find in some of his writings, as Schenkel³ points out, some passages which seem to set the matter in a different light. He speaks of the flesh of Christ received in the Sacrament

¹ *Tracts* ii. p. 169.

² Julius Müller, *op. cit.* p. 464.

³ Schenkel, *Wesen des Protestantismus*, vol. i. p. 524 f.

as a spiritual and eternal food, which, unlike common food, is not changed into the flesh of the partaker, but which changes the partaker, and makes him to resemble Christ Himself, and endows him with the Spirit.¹ He therefore calls the body or the flesh in the Sacrament a *Gottesfleisch*, a *Geistfleisch*. He says of it, "It is in God and God in it. Therefore it is living, and gives life to all who eat it, both to body and soul." From this it appears that the body and blood are by no means inactive in the Supper; on the contrary, that they do something and are operative in the receiver. But Luther omits to explain how this is consistent with the partaking by the unworthy, for they then would also receive the life-giving flesh of Christ. He even speaks in some places as if he had altogether forgotten the communion of the unworthy. In connection with this, he also frequently says that the body of Christ is received by the mouth, but not torn by the teeth, and so forth, for this receiving of the true and substantial body of Christ does not take place in a coarse or carnal way, but in a spiritual, supernatural, and mysterious manner. By these words the *manducatio oralis* seems to be openly withdrawn.

Further, Luther often asserts that the body of Christ, although it is received entirely at every Communion by every guest, still remains uninjured and without change in its glorious state at the right hand of God. In the Letter to the Swiss,² 13th December, 1537, he denies that Christ descends from and ascends to heaven, whether visible or invisible. "We hold firmly to this article of faith, 'Ascended to Heaven, Seated at the right hand of God.'"
 Do such words not lead to a dualism, to an assertion of the existence of two different kinds of body, the one partaken of in the Supper and the other a spiritual body? And does Luther not approach the "dynamical" view of Calvin in some places? In a well-known illustration³ he speaks of the light which comes from one sun, and which illuminates innumerable places at the same time. He speaks of the mirror which, when smashed in a thousand pieces, will

¹ *Dass diese Worte*, Weimar edit. vol. 23.

² De Wette, *Luthers Briefe*, v. p. 85.

³ *Grosses Bekenntnis vom Abendmahl*, Erl. edit. xxx. p. 369. J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 467.

show in each piece the same image; of the voice of the preacher which may be heard by four or five thousand people. Are we not led to the conclusion that with Luther it is not really a question of the substance but of the presence of an activity of the substance? From such expressions—and there are many similar in his writings—do we not see him inclining to the idea which at that time was the basis of the teaching of Bucer and Peter Martyr, and which afterwards was developed in detail by Calvin?

CHAPTER XVII

CALVIN'S DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. IS IT SCRIPTURAL?

THE doctrine of the Lord's Supper may be studied in two ways, both of them historical. The student may begin with the teaching of Justin Martyr (A.D. 153), or Irenaeus (A.D. 180), and work back to earlier traces at Troas (A.D. 60), at Corinth (A.D. 50), at Jerusalem (A.D. 30). This is the method adopted by Batiffol in the latest edition of his *Études d'Histoire* (1920).¹

On the other hand, this process may be reversed, and starting with the New Testament records, the gradual development may be traced to these Patristic writers, as in the works of many modern scholars.²

Lobstein has shewn how all the Reformers profess to follow this latter method, and he collects categorical declarations from their writings concerning the normative and typical character of the first Supper in the Upper Room.

He reminds us how, when Luther wished to combat the sacrifice of the Mass, he insisted on the necessity of maintaining the identity of the Institution of Christ and of the doctrine and practice of the present time, and made of this identity the criterion of the Christian character of our worship and of our conception of the Lord's Supper.³ He

¹ Batiffol, *Études, l'Eucharistie*, 1920.

² Goguel, *L'Eucharistie*, 1909. Spitta, *Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Urchristentums*, p. 208 f. Lambert, *The Sacraments of the New Testament*, p. 242. Schultzen, *Das Abendmahl im N.T.*, p. 1 ff. Lobstein, *La Doctrine de la Sainte Cène*, pp. 11 and 23.

³ Wace and Buchheim, *op. cit.* p. 162.

shows how in the *De vera et falsa religione* (iii. p. 20) Zwingli made equally strong assertions, and maintained that if the usage of the Sacrament had been kept up according to the Institution of Christ, the Church would have been saved from the most criminal abuses. Lobstein acknowledges that Calvin professed a similar aim, and points out how in the *De Coena Domini* he laid down the lines of discussion, and began with the significant words, "First, we shall explain to what end, and for what purpose, our Lord instituted this Holy Sacrament."¹

There can be no doubt that Calvin, in the course of his expositions, frequently refers to the ordinance of the Lord, either to prove his own doctrine or to combat the ideas of his opponents. "So that we may despatch all these troubles, we must reduce all to the ordinance of the Lord, as the rule which will not allow us to fail, when we follow it." The question now before us is, Did Calvin remain true to his professed aim? Can his doctrine be clearly deduced from the teachings of Holy Scripture? Lobstein and others are of the opinion that it cannot.

The Scriptural basis of the Lord's Supper has been the subject of critical study ever since the issue of Harnack's *Brod und Wasser* in 1891,² and many difficulties have been raised by the presence of variations in the Synoptist and Pauline reports of the words spoken by Jesus at the Holy Table. It is common knowledge that all the Synoptists give an account of the Sacrament, while John makes mention of a Supper on the evening before the Saviour's death. Paul also gives a definite report, and vouches for its authenticity with weighty words ("I passed on to you what I received from the Lord"). Now the striking fact is, that no two of the four narratives agree entirely. In the Greek there is only one sentence of five words which is common to all four writers, and this in English reads, "This is My Body." In fact, the amount of divergence is quite surprising, and if Jesus said what Mark asserts that He said, He cannot have said exactly what Paul or Luke affirms that He said. Taking the four accounts and

¹ *Tracts*, ii. p. 164 ff.

² Harnack, *Brod und Wasser*—*Die Eucharistischen Elemente bei Justin, in Texte und Untersuchungen*, vii. Band, Heft 2.

comparing them, we can classify them under three heads, which may later be reduced to two.¹

I. Mark and Matthew make one narrative with slight variations, and it is generally agreed that Matthew is dependent on Mark or on a common source.

II. Luke's account calls for choice between the shorter and longer text, and the appraisal and meaning of each. It constitutes one of the chief problems connected with the critical study of the Lord's Supper. The whole case is fully stated by Westcott and Hort, who regard Luke xxii. 19b-20 as a later interpolation taken from I. Cors. II, 23.² The question is of supreme importance, involving as it does the institutional nature of the Sacrament and the command of Jesus to repeat the rite. Recent scholars, however, are fairly well agreed that the Textus Receptus reading should be retained, and thus the dependence of the Lucan on the Pauline narrative is reaffirmed.³

III. Paul's report in I. Cors. is the fullest, and in doctrinal content it is the most significant. In considering its particular standpoint, we have to remember that while the Matthew-Mark and the Paul-Luke reports both relate the Supper to the death of Christ, the former was necessarily looking forward to the event, while the latter was reflecting upon an accomplished fact. The former explains the death by the Supper, while the latter explains the Supper by the death.

If we grant that in the main we have two reports, a Matthew-Mark and a Paul-Luke, we find the former shorter in more than one place, and as expansion is easier than abbreviation, we might conclude either that the words Paul adds are explanatory, or at any rate come from a

¹ Hauck-Herzog, *Encyclop.*; article, "Abendmahl," Loofs; third edition. Zahn, *Einleitung in das N.T.*, pp. 1-24. Gore, *The Body of Christ*, p. 246. Tischendorf, *Synopsis Evangelica*. *Hasting's Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*; "Lord's Supper," Falconer and Stone. Guy, *Was Holy Communion instituted by Christ?* p. 72. Hoffmann, *Die Abendmahlsgedanken Jesu Christi*. Weizsäcker, *The Apostolic Age*.

² Westcott and Hort, *The N.T. in Greek*, Introduction and Appendix, p. 63 f.

³ Schweitzer, *Das Abendmahl im Zusammengang mit dem Leben Jesu*, i. p. 46. Clemen, C., *Der Ursprung des heiligen Abendmahls*, p. 21 f.

later source than Mark's simpler and shorter statement. It is for this and other reasons that Jülicher¹ and Spitta² favour Mark. Dr. Percy Gardner in support of his peculiar "trance" theory gives the preference to Paul.³ The question of priority, however, is not of great importance, and we can appeal to both groups of text as furnishing an authentic narrative of the acts and words of the Upper Room.

We may now proceed to ask what were the thoughts of Calvin on questions such as these. It is a charge commonly brought against him that he operated by *a priori* methods in his treatment of the Scripture, that he set forth with fixed dogmatic conceptions of the Supper, and referred to the New Testament for corroboration of his predetermined theory. In addition to this, he is oftentimes credited with teaching the literal and plenary inspiration of Scripture. It is true that Calvin was a zealous Bible student. His writings are replete with Bible terms. "He deduces all his ideas from the Bible," says Wernle. "It is his codex of doctrine and of life."⁴ He was not, however, a slavish literalist.

The "testimony of the Holy Spirit" did not decide for him the authenticity of all the books of the Bible, nor the readings of certain texts. It authenticated rather the substance, the doctrine of the Scripture.⁵ Diestel calls Calvin the "creator of the true exegesis."⁶ He protested continually against the allegorical interpretation of the Middle Ages. In a letter to Cranmer of April, 1552, he advocates a Conference of doctors for the purpose of seeking out the true sense of Bible texts. Professor Spence writes, "Calvin is the great initiator of the method of interpretation, called in our day the 'grammatical-historical.'"⁷ In connection with the critical problems

¹ Jülicher, *Theologische Abhandlungen*, p. 237.

² Spitta, *Urchristentum*, p. 266.

³ Gardner, *The Origin of the Lord's Supper*, p. 12.

⁴ Wernle, *Akademischer Vortrag*, p. 31.

⁵ Doumergue, *op. cit.* iv. p. 78.

⁶ Diestel, *Geschichte des Alten Testaments*, p. 267.

⁷ Spence, *O.S. Magazine*, July, 1909.

raised by the existence of variations in the Eucharistic narratives, we find that he grants implicitly that there are two groups of text. It can hardly be said which he favours, as his doctrine is based on broad exegetical foundations. Had the modern results of Biblical Criticism been known to him, we do not doubt that he would have treated them in a sympathetic and broad-minded way. The interpretations of his Commentaries are sufficient guarantee of this. He did not even hesitate to hazard a theory of his own when confronted by apparent variations in the accounts of the same event in Holy Scripture. An interesting illustration of this is found in his treatment of a critical question which has assumed importance in recent discussions as to the different dates of the Holy Supper in the narratives of the Synoptists and St. John. The case may be stated briefly thus :¹

(a) The Fourth Gospel places the Lord's Supper on the day before the Passover, *i.e.*, 13th Nisan.

(b) The three Synoptists seem distinctly to connect it with the Passover, *i.e.*, the 14th Nisan, and to make of it a Paschal meal.

Now, accredited modern scholars have put forward the solution that Jesus and His disciples " ante-dated the Passover," and kept the Feast a day sooner than it was kept by the rest of the Jewish community.²

In contrast to this solution we have that of Calvin, that since the Passover, falling that year on a Friday, was reckoned as a Sabbath, the Jews, to avoid the inconvenience of two successive Sabbaths, postponed the Passover by a day. Jesus adhered to the date fixed by the Law.³

Modern scholarship rejects his solution, but the theory propounded by Calvin is proof that he was no mere literalist, and that he had a flair for textual and critical problems, and a readiness to offer an original solution.

¹ Guy, *op. cit.* p. 81.

² Godet, Beyschlag, Lobstein, Lambert. Zöckler, Hauck-Herzog, ix. p. 32. Sanday, *Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible*; article, " Jesus Christ."

³ Calvin, *Commentary on Matthew*, xxvi. 17. Dr. David Smith, *The Days of His Flesh*, p. 536.

The difficulty of determining the date of the first Supper is, however, only part of the larger question as to the relation of the Eucharist to the Jewish Passover and Covenants.

Schultzen lays the entire emphasis on the connection of the Lord's Supper with the Sinaitic and Prophetic Covenants, and completely dissociates the Old and New Testament Feasts.¹

This is an extreme position, but it is certain that this Covenant aspect was one of great importance to the mind of Christ. In the Mark-Matthew narrative we have the significant words, "This is My Covenant-blood," and in the Paul-Luke report, "This Cup is the New Covenant in My blood." These two sayings, while differently expressed, really imply the same thing. They both suggest, however, a somewhat different range of ideas than is usually associated with the Paschal meal. By general consent, they allude to the Covenant of Sinai (Exodus xxiv. 3-8), and to such prophetic utterances as in Jeremiah xxxi. 31-34. In alluding to the covenant blood, they imply the covenant sacrifice, and in speaking of the covenant Cup they connect the ordinance of the Supper with a covenant meal. Now, the Passover at the time of our Lord can hardly be said to have embraced the idea of the covenant blood. This idea is rather found in the Exodus passage, where Moses, after the giving of the Law at Sinai, offered burnt offerings of oxen unto the Lord, and then took half of the blood and sprinkled it upon the people, saying, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words" (Exodus xxiv. 3-8).

The mention of the covenant blood was evidently meant to refer to that covenant which was ratified at Sinai by sacrifice, and by the sprinkling of blood. This blood was sprinkled partly upon the altar, as a symbol of the offering of the victim's life to God, and partly upon the people, as a token of their purification and their consecration to Jehovah.²

Again, when Jesus said, "This Cup is the New Testament in My Blood," He was evidently alluding to the prophecy of Jeremiah xxxi. 31-34. "Behold, the days are coming, saith the Lord, when I will make with the house

¹ Schultzen, *op. cit.* p. 40.

² Lambert *op. cit.* p. 296.

of Israel a new covenant; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to bring them forth from the land of Egypt. For this is My covenant which I will make with the house of Israel: I will put My laws into their minds, and on their hearts will I write them; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins will I remember no more." It seems necessary, then, that for a clear idea of the "covenant" aspect of the Lord's Supper, we should go beyond the simple Passover teaching. We must take account both of the old covenant of the Law and of the new covenant spoken of by the Prophets. We do not mean that the thought of the Passover is to be entirely dissociated from the doctrine of the Supper. We would rather contend for an enriching and an illuminating of Eucharistic teaching by the blending of the Covenant and Passover suggestions. The Passover must have been in the mind of Christ if it is proved that it was at the close of the Paschal meal that He instituted the Holy Rite. Nor is there any contradiction between the Covenant and Passover ideas. The report of the giving of the covenant at Sinai naturally presupposes the Passover in Egypt, and Christ who made all things new not only substituted His own Supper for the Passover, but at that same Supper taught that His death was the divine fulfilment of the new covenant proclaimed by Jeremiah. In the new Feast, Christ united the ideas of the Passover and the Covenant, and gathered up ancient rite and prophecy into one "sweet feast of love divine."

We shall now enquire to what extent the essential elements of the Passover-Covenant idea are present in Calvin's theory.

I. He clearly related the Supper to the *death and sacrifice of Christ*. He shows how the symbolical actions of the Table are significant, and lays emphasis on the "breaking," as implying that at the original celebration Christ's death was near. He also dwells on the significance of the "breaking" for all subsequent celebrations, and relates it clearly to Christ's death for us. By his strenuous opposition to the Romish Mass, he shows that in his mind there

was a definite connection between the covenant sacrifice which Moses offered *once and for all* at Sinai and the New covenant which Christ established *once and for all* on the Cross. Neither sacrifice could be repeated. Therefore the Mass as a repetition of Christ's offering was unscriptural and false.

II. Calvin strongly emphasised the *memorial character* of the Lord's Supper. He had no doubt as to the injunction and command in the Paul-Luke narrative—"This do in remembrance of Me." To Calvin the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ, and the modern discussions as to whether Jesus or Paul was the real originator of the Feast would have left him cold.¹ We have seen the great zeal he expressed for its frequent celebration, and how he was frustrated in his desire to establish the weekly Communion in the Church of Geneva. He saw nothing contradictory in the Mark-Matthew and the Paul-Luke texts. He was quite aware that there exists a progressive revelation, and that the Spirit may have revealed to St. Paul truths concerning the Supper which were hidden from the Synoptist writers.²

To Calvin the Lord's Supper was served heir to the command associated with the Passover, "And this day shall be unto you for a Memorial, and ye shall keep it a Feast to the Lord throughout the generations" (Exodus xii. 14). The Commemorative aspect of the Lord's Supper receives adequate expression in his doctrine.

III. The ancient idea of *federal relationship* implied in the association of the Supper with the Covenant-Passover teaching also receives full recognition in Calvin's theory. This Covenant relationship had two distinct aspects. (a) In the Covenant meals there was a definite communion or fellowship between the covenant members and their Head. (b) In the Covenant meals there was also symbolised a fellowship or communion of the covenant makers one with the other, and this further suggested mutual duties and obligations on the part of all.

¹ Goguel, *L'apôtre Paul et Jesus Christ*, 1901. Knowling, *The Testimony of Paul to Christ*, 1911. Deissmann, *The Religion of Christ the Faith of Paul*, 1923. Dobschütz, *The Apostolic Age*, Eng. trans., 1909.

² Doumergue, *op. cit.* iv. p. 75.

III. (b) We shall deal with this *latter* aspect first, an aspect which is strongly emphasised by Calvin. In our exposition of his doctrine, we have seen how much stress he laid on the attitude of mind and heart with which we should approach the Holy Table. We have noted his exhortation to brotherly love and charity. He certainly does not dwell so frequently on the Lord's Supper as a Community-sign (*Gemeinschaftszeichen*) as Zwingli does, but he certainly held that it was a rite, like the Passover-Covenant feast, to be celebrated by God's chosen people. His views on ecclesiastical discipline took their origin from his fervent desire to keep pure the Body of the Lord, the Church, and he exhorts all Christians to realise their unity in Jesus Christ. We can also discern a strong *ethical* note in his Eucharistic doctrine. This he borrowed from the Pauline teaching. It is noteworthy that all Paul's references to the Supper are introduced, not with the purpose of elucidating the sacramental doctrine, but with the practical purpose of correcting the abuses which had crept into the celebrations of his day. Indeed, we might say that St. Paul's teaching on the Holy Supper is largely incidental. His aim and purpose was, like that of Calvin, strongly *sozialethisch*.¹

III. (a) In regarding the Lord's Supper as a covenant meal, Calvin also gave full value to the idea of the communion of the believer with His Lord. It is, however, on his explanation of the *modus* of this communion that his doctrine is assailed as going beyond the simple Scripture narratives. We have seen how he taught that that communion is attained by certain forces proceeding from Christ's body, now at the right hand of God in power. These forces are communicated through the Holy Spirit to the believing soul. Now it is quite evident that this explanation finds no definite warrant in Holy Scripture, and there are those who regard it as a "dream and speculation."² "From all such dreams and speculations," says Lambert, "we can only be delivered by adhering firmly to our historical statements, and refusing to allow dogmatic considerations of one kind or another to tempt us to assume this, that, or the other miraculous event, for

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* iv. p. 608.

² Lambert, *op. cit.* p. 280.

which our sources afford no warrant whatsoever." These are hard words, as Adamson has pointed out,¹ but they are justified if we are not permitted to go beyond the simple celebration of the Upper Room. But we hold that while it is usual to see in Paul's doctrine an advance on that of the Synoptists, so it may be allowable for a theologian like Calvin to "complete" his theory by suggestions which have come to him from his "Master Teacher," the Holy Spirit. It is also quite allowable to distinguish between the immediate didactic value of the Supper and its special purpose as an Institution. There is certainly no Scriptural warrant for Calvin's private and particular description of the "mode" of the mystical communion between the believer and Christ, but we have to remember that he claimed no special authority for his own explanation. He certainly asserted, as we have seen, that his doctrine was based on Holy Scripture. Luther and Zwingli also made such claims, but we find no mention in the Bible, either of the Lutheran "ubiquity" and *communicatio idiomatum* or of the Zwinglian *alloeosis*. If we regard the Lord's Supper as an "acted parable," as Jülicher suggests,² it might seem that there was something almost prophetic in the relation of the first Supper to that of subsequent celebrations. Gretillat has suggested this explanation. "As the Paschal feast was typical (*typique*) of the Institution of the Supper, so the words of the Institution were prophetic, and the act which they accomplished could only be the pledge of succeeding celebrations."³ And yet, Calvin would have been the first to object to any theory which, of necessity, involved that the first celebration in the Upper Room was not a true communion. He would have regarded the Supper as partaken of daily and weekly in New Testament times as reproducing in all its essentials the rite inaugurated on the night on which the Lord Jesus was betrayed. It is obvious, of course, that criticism on this particular point of Calvin's Eucharistic doctrine proceeds from the fear that he approached too near the Lutheran position. Professor H. R. Mackintosh has

¹ Adamson, *The Christian Doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, p. 177.

² Jülicher, *op. cit.* p. 243.

³ Gretillat, *Théologie systématique*, p. 215.

discussed this question, and he sees the defect of Calvin's theory in the quasi-material manner in which he regards the flesh and blood of Christ. He thinks that the Reformed writers, and Calvin in particular, were haunted by the fear that it is not enough to know that in the Sacrament the soul feeds upon Christ by faith and love. He is of opinion that Calvin tried to get behind that simple thought, to grasp some spiritual and heavenly substance by the assimilation of which celestial benefits become ours. "In the higher reaches of his theory, Calvin put forward certain speculations which have very little meaning, and which he himself must have been at a loss to understand."¹ This is a well-founded criticism, and we would be disposed to agree with it did we not remember that to Calvin Christ's body is all spiritual energy and power (*virtus*). His conception is certainly dynamical, but we do not consider that it is material. Professor Mackintosh would not object to Calvin's theory did he make plain that what "flesh and blood" mean is not an "indefinable substance," but simply "Christ Himself, as a Person, incarnate, crucified, and clothed in the Gospel of His death." But did Calvin not mean that? Did he not inveigh against all material conceptions? He not only regarded the words of Institution as symbolical, but also such phrases as "eat and drink," "flesh and blood." He regarded the former as signifying "spiritual appropriation and assimilation," and the latter as pointing to an "Incarnate Redeemer, and our interest in His death."

By those who detect a strong strain of realism in his sacramental teaching, it has been alleged that Calvin is dominated by the Johannine conception, and we have to admit that, in a general way, he took account of the discourse at Capernaum in John vi.² He could not well do otherwise, holding as he did a strong belief in the mystical union which subsists between Christ and the believing soul. He does not, however, base his doctrine on this passage. He rather accepts its general spirit, and permits himself to be influenced by its parabolic teaching on the vivific power

¹ Professor Mackintosh, *Expositor*, March, 1903, p. 194.

² For the Lord's Supper in St. John's Gospel, see Professor Moffat in *Expositor*, 1913.

of the Body of Christ. He accepts it as a parable. He was too busily engaged in combating the Romanist theory to allow this passage more than a parabolic significance. In his Commentary on John vi., he remarks upon the unusual succession of phrases, "bread which cometh down from heaven; eating the flesh; drinking the blood; eating Him," etc., but he does not relate them to the Lord's Supper. He regards them rather as an illuminating commentary on the essence and nature of faith, without which no true communion with God can be consummated. In short, whatever objection may be levelled against his Eucharistic theory, it cannot be said that he minimises the importance of the *communion* aspect. If he ascends to transcendental heights, he is led to do so by a strong desire to emphasise the reality of the fellowship that can be enjoyed by the believer with his Risen Lord in this new covenant-meal.

It is this same anxiety that lays his theory open to the charge of being unscriptural, when he explains the two ways by which the believer partakes of Christ's flesh and blood. We are already familiar with his twofold description. In some places he speaks of the energy of Christ's body in heaven being communicated to the soul of the believer on earth. In other places he asserts that the Holy Spirit raises the soul of the believer to the glorified body of Christ in heaven for the reception of its life. "Calvin seems to have swung hesitatingly between these two views of representing the manner in which Christ operates on us," says Dr. Mitchell Hunter.¹ This is all true, and we have already discussed this apparent dualism of thought. It is sufficient now to state that while Calvin seems to have preferred the latter mode of description (the idea of the ascent of the believing soul to heaven), he uses this as a merely metaphorical expression. Loofs considers it unjust (*unrecht*) that Calvin should be classed by Lutheran theologians as holding a *dogmatisch-mythologisch* theory from his use of this phrase. He regards it as nothing more than a devotional exhortation similar to the *sursum corda*.² We cannot claim that this exhortation has any warrant in the

¹ Dr. Mitchell Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, p. 182.

² Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 892.

Scriptural account of the events in the Upper Room, but there seems to be a certain authority for it in the "lifting up of the soul" (Ps. xxv. 1 and Ps. lxxxvi. 4). This is the sense in which Loofs, and doubtless Calvin also, regard it. It has found a permanent place in the Order of the administration of the Holy Communion in the Church of England, where, just before the Eucharist prayer, we have the exhortation and response, "Lift up your hearts. We lift them up unto the Lord." We believe that that was all that was in the mind of Calvin, and that if this direction carried any doctrinal significance, it was in answer to the Lutheran consubstantiation and the Roman Catholic transubstantiation, both of which brought down the body of Christ from heaven, and in a manner enclosed them in the bread.

IV. We have so far seen that Calvin's view is based on Holy Scripture in that it lays sufficient emphasis on the two important aspects of the Supper as a *Commemoration* and a *Communion*. There is, however, one other aspect of the Sacrament which is prominent in the narratives of the Synoptists and St. Paul—the *Eschatological* aspect. In Matthew-Mark we read, "I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God with you." Somewhat similar words occur in the narrative of Luke, but in a different position. The best critical opinion unites in preferring the order designated by Matthew and Mark. In St. Paul's report also we have a decided eschatological note. "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death, till He come" (I. Cors. ii. 26). It is plain from this fourfold repetition that this aspect of the Supper is a very important one. Now, eschatology is a comparatively modern subject of study, and we do not propose to enter into the question as to whether Christ referred to a return in the lifetime of those present in the Upper Room or pointed forward to a glad reunion in the heavenly places. There is much difference of opinion as to the eschatological ideas of the Master. We content ourselves with the acceptance of the usual sense that the Sacrament carried with it an express promise of a more rich and joyful participation in the kingdom of God. This is the view

taken by Spitta,¹ who sees in this eschatological idea the chief content of the Sacrament. To him it has no bearing on the death of Christ. It is essentially a feast of anticipation. A. Schweitzer² does not go so far as Spitta, but he, too, regards the eschatological aspect as supreme. While we cannot consent to this conclusion, we nevertheless assert that in an evaluation of the doctrinal content of the Supper the eschatological bearing should receive a greater consideration than is usually given to it. In the course of a considerable pastoral experience we have learned that this aspect is one that makes a strong appeal to earnest and devout communicants. It strengthens the spirit and mitigates the note of sadness which naturally accompanies the thought of the Master's sacrificial death. It assures the celebrant that that death and sacrifice were not in vain, but were the gateway to a greater triumph in which all believers in Christ will share. It points to the Second Coming of the Lord, when He shall again be the Host, not at a feast of mournful farewell, but at a table of gladness and of joy.

Now, it is questionable if Calvin has made enough of the eschatological bearing of the Supper. He certainly mentions it, but he does not emphasise it. This is in harmony with his whole attitude to the "last things." It is significant that he wrote Commentaries on all the New Testament books save the Apocalypse. In the *Institutes* (Book III. chap. 25, section 10) he warns against vain and frivolous curiosity. He makes no mention there of the "marriage supper of the Lamb." He exhorts us to cultivate sobriety in the matter of our future state, "lest, unmindful of our feeble capacity, we presume to take too lofty a flight, and be overcome by the brightness of the celestial glory." In conclusion, if in a general manner we measure Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper by the norm of Holy Scripture we find that in its principal features it gives a faithful representation.

I. With the Bible, Calvin teaches that the Lord's Supper was designed to be a Commemoration of the Saviour's

¹ Spitta, *Urchristentum*, p. 282 ff. Dobschütz, *The Eschatology of the Gospels*, London, 1910. Goguel, *Jesus, the Nazarene*, London, 1926.

² Schweitzer, *Das Abendmahl*, p. 61 f.

sacrifice and death, by which the New Covenant was established.

II. With the Bible, he connects its celebration with the Memorial feast, with which it had many points of contact and resemblance.

III. With the Bible, he teaches that there is a special gift and grace, that of a real communion with the very Person of Christ Himself, for the elements are not only exposed before us, but we are invited to appropriate them, to "eat and drink."

IV. With the Bible, he teaches that the Supper is the bond of love which unites Christians with one another, and the celebration is a public profession of their common faith in the efficacy of Christ's death.

V. With the Bible, he teaches that without Faith which lays hold on the pardon of the Cross and life eternal, there is no true communion in His flesh and blood.¹

¹ Destrech, *La Sainte Cène d'après Calvin*, p. 34.

CHAPTER XVIII

CALVIN'S DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. IS IT CANDID AND CONSISTENT?

KAHNIS complains in his *Die Lehre vom Abendmahl* that "it is difficult to enter into Calvin's thought on the Lord's Supper, not on account of its depth, but by reason of its artificial, indefinite, and cloudy nature. For Calvin treats those with the greatest contempt who connect the body and blood with the elements, while yet he considers it a gross misrepresentation if any one accuses him of denying that the elements are vehicles of the true body and blood."¹

This is a criticism of Calvin from the Lutheran standpoint, although it is interesting to note that Kahnis himself came to adopt the "dynamical" theory in his later teaching.² He is classed by Philippi as definitely and essentially Calvinist.³

Dr. Alexander Schweizer in *Die Christliche Glaubenslehre*, speaking of Calvin, says, "Calvin, who discerns a 'too much' in Luther and a 'too little' in Zwingli, tries to preserve the golden mean, and for that reason, contrary to his usual practice, he adopts a somewhat vacillating attitude on the subject of the Lord's Supper."⁴

Martensen affirms that the Calvinistic doctrine of the Lord's Supper rests upon an overt principle of dualism between the kingdom of Nature and the kingdom of Grace, a dualism so thorough that the Lord's Supper is literally

¹ Kahnis, *Die Lehre vom Abendmahl*, p. 413.

² Kahnis, *Lutherische Dogmatik*, p. 353 f.

³ Philippi, *Kirchliche Glaubenslehre*, v. p. 364 f.

⁴ Schweizer, *Die Christliche Glaubenslehre*, ii. p. 431 f.

divided into two parts, quite distinct, the one in heaven and the other on earth.¹

Lobstein, who himself professes a doctrine somewhat similar to that of Zwingli, criticises Calvin from that standpoint. "In trying to find a middle term between the Lutheran doctrine, which seemed to him to be superstitious, and the point of view of Zwingli, which he considered 'profane,' Calvin landed on a conception which was mistaken in two ways. It was wanting in clearness and precision. The hypothesis of the spiritual presence of the Master acting on believers by virtue of the Holy Spirit is singularly compromised by the two interpretations between which the thoughts of the Reformer oscillate. At one time he maintains that the Holy Ghost communicates the divine and celestial forces contained in the body of Christ to believers, though Christ is now exalted at the right hand of God. At another time, he teaches that the soul of the believer is raised on the arms of faith to heaven, where it enjoys communion with the Saviour. But this pretended solution is not only obscure and intricate, it is wanting in all exegetical support and Scriptural proof. One can affirm that the Calvinistic theory of the 'dynamic' presence of the Lord in the Eucharistic act is condemned without appeal by all the documents of the New Testament."²

Schultz, who classes Calvin's theory as *mystisch*, holds that such a view as he promulgates cannot be consistently maintained along with a symbolical interpretation of the words of Institution. The *mystisch* view of Calvin must of necessity fall back on the *historisch* view of Zwingli, or go forward to the *wunderhaft* view of Luther.³

Wilberforce, in the *Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, asserts that Calvin's doctrine is practically dishonest in its lack of candour. Calvin purposely confuses the issue. He speaks of Christ's body being present in its virtue, as if some force or virtue issued from His flesh. He also speaks of Christ's body being "virtually" present, in the sense of "nominally," because the approach of the soul to Christ produces the same results as if it were present. "In the

¹ Martensen, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 441.

² Lobstein, *op. cit.* p. 179.

³ Schultz, *op. cit.* p. 53.

one case, Christ's body is supposed to be the agent ; in the other, it is the souls of men. This ambiguity of the words ' virtual ' and ' virtue ' renders it possible for him to represent these ideas as almost identical. This was not an inconvenient circumstance, as it was Calvin's purpose to invent a formula which would satisfy both the followers of Luther and of Zwingli. Besides, his whole theory depends on his doctrine of the Decrees. He represents the Almighty as publicly granting a charter to mankind at large, which He privately annuls by a secret article, and this is to attribute conduct to the God of truth which would be discreditable to an earthly sovereign." ¹

Dr. Charles Hodge, who does not himself rise above Zwingli in his negative period, affirms that there are two distinct strands in Calvin's teaching. " In some places, Calvin lays all stress on the sacrificial efficacy of Christ's death as the great object appropriated in the Sacrament. In other places, he lays equal stress on the idea of a life-giving power, received in the Lord's Supper from the human side of Christ's life, that is, from His body and blood." ²

These criticisms of Calvin are representative of various schools of thought, and all unite in making this charge of ambiguity, which in some cases amounts to an accusation of lack of candour on the part of the great Reformer.

We shall conclude our study with a discussion as to how far these charges are justifiable.

I. It is sometimes said that Calvin attributed no special force to the Sacrament, but taught that what is elsewhere received by faith without the signs and significant actions is received here in the same way along with their use. It is true that Calvin depicts the grace represented in the Sacrament as being of the same general nature with what has place in the life of believers at other times. " In the Supper," says the *Consensus Tigurinus*, " Christ communicates Himself to us, Who, however, had previously imparted Himself to us, and abides in us perpetually." ³

" There is no evidence," writes Professor Paterson, " that Calvin thought that the benefits enjoyed in the

¹ Wilberforce, *The Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, p. 140 f.

² Hodge, *op. cit.* iii. p. 646.

³ *Tracts*, ii. p. 218.

Sacrament are of a different kind from those received in the use of the other means of grace, and that they were not otherwise attainable than in the Sacrament.”¹ And yet we believe that for Calvin the sacramental transaction carries in it a certain, special exhibition of grace for the confirmation and promoting of the new life under its own form. Calvin's idea of the believers' union with Christ rests on the supposition of an actual passing over of the power of His life into their persons. It needs in this view not merely a subjective, but an objective basis. It is the nourishment of a real communication progressively kept up with Him, “Whose flesh is meat indeed, and Whose blood is drink indeed” unto everlasting life. It is our opinion that Calvin regarded the Lord's Supper as the mystical medium, by which the union of the believer with Christ in its standing form is made to receive new strength and force through such real communication with the Saviour. Does this not convey a special significance and efficacy to the Holy Feast? The Lord's Supper continues and carries forward the order of grace as it stood before, just as our common meals fall in with the general process of our natural life, and yet are special means for its preservation.

Such is the view taken of the subject by Calvin.²

However grace may be independent of the Sacraments, these are still in the Church the regularly constituted media of its objective presentation, and we are bound to seek it, therefore, through their proffered help. Hence they are said to be organs or instruments by which God efficaciously works in the souls of His people. The special use of the Lord's Supper is, according to Calvin, to continue and repair our communion as already established with Christ. At the same time, he asserts in the strongest terms the full objectivity of the communication which Christ makes of Himself in the mystical transaction. Thus, in the *First Defence of the Consensus Tigurinus*, we have it illustrated by a comparison with the light and heat of the natural sun. It is not enough that the light shines. There must be on our side vision to receive it. But this vision has no power to produce the light itself.

¹ Professor Paterson, *The Rule of Faith*, p. 276.

² *Mercersburg Review*, September, 1850.

"So as the heat of the sun, which quickens a living and breathing body, gives rise only to corruption in a corpse, it is certain that the Sacraments, where the spirit of faith is wanting, breathe a savour of death rather than a savour of life." Life is the necessary condition of the salutary animation that comes from the sun, but it is not the cause of this, nor even its measure, for it comes in from abroad as an aliment to the life itself. And so it is also that, while the proper use of the Lord's Supper depends on the condition of faith, the grace which it offers is in no sense the product of this, but must be considered rather as the entrance of a new measure of life into the soul by its means, raising faith itself into higher exercise. It is an objective grace. In the Second Defence this idea of the objective force of the Lord's Supper is brought out with still greater emphasis.

"We assert," it is said, "that the flesh and blood are truly offered us in the Supper for the vivification of our souls. Nor is our definition ambiguous. . . . We affirm a true participation of Christ's flesh and blood in the Sacrament. If any one stand on the word 'substance,' we assert that Christ breathes life from the substance of His flesh into our souls; yea, that He diffuses into us His own life."¹ This statement is surely strong enough to refute the objection that Calvin attributed no special force to the Sacrament, and saw there no particular objective gift.

The passage quoted above from the Second Defence contains two words which have also given rise to the charge of ambiguity. These two words are "soul" and "substance."²

II. The charge is sometimes brought against Calvin that he uses the word *anima* in the sense of mere intellect and thought, so that the Communion offered in the Lord's Supper is a mere *mentis contemplatio*. But one need only read what he says in the Commentary to I. Thess. x. 23, or in the *Institutes*, i. 15, to be fully satisfied that the word *anima* or "soul" is held to mean the psychic substance of man, the centre of his individuality from which both his spiritual and corporal functions proceed. According to the above passages, the *anima*, when taken by itself in opposition to the body, is the immortal essence of

¹ *Tracts*, ii. p. 248.

² *Mercersburg Review*, September, 1850.

man. This has two parts, the *intellectus* and the *voluntas*. The soul, when distinguished from the body, and the spirit as a third, is "the seat of the affections, or the will and all affections." The spirit, then, is the intelligence and reason. Spirit and soul are not *plures animae*, sensitive and rational, but the one soul. We see thus that Calvin never defines *anima* as the region of "thought," in the same sense as *mens* or *intellectus*. It is always, for him, the immortal substance of man, the natural germ of his psychic existence, the seat of his affections and impulses, the basis, in short, of his corporeal life on the one side, and of his spiritual life on the other. When Calvin says, then, that the soul is fed with Christ, he means nothing other or less than this, that the substance of man, his proper being, the source of his entire individual existence, both as corporeal and spiritual, is in a real way nourished from the substance of Christ, as the only Food which can truly give him life.

III. A *third* charge is frequently made that Calvin uses the word "substance" in an ambiguous sense. What exactly does Calvin mean by this much disputed word? Does he mean the substance of Christ's body and blood or the substance of His Person generally? If we accept the latter alternative, as undoubtedly we must, it is then alleged that the substance of Christ's Person, with which we are fed, is nothing more than Christ's spiritual power. Calvin would doubtless have granted this, provided it means that the whole Christ is received in the Sacrament. But Lutheran theologians of earlier and later times have not been able fully to assure themselves that Calvin was in earnest when he taught our participation of the whole Christ. First, it was objected that Christ, according to Calvin, remains as to His human nature in heaven, so that only His divine nature imparts itself to us in the Supper. This is a groundless objection, as Calvin has declared over and over again, that for a real union of both the natures of Christ with us local nearness is not needed, and local distance, in view of the Spirit's omnipresence, forms no barrier. This has repeatedly been made clear in the foregoing pages. This objection, accordingly, that only the divine nature of Christ is imparted to us has been given

up to make room for another. Calvin, it is allowed, teaches the communication of both natures of Christ in the Supper, but only as regards His theandric *Spirit*, not as regards His theandric *Body*.¹

That Christ's glorified body should be present as material substance Calvin never admitted. The glorified body is for him, in its substance, as we have repeatedly seen, active power (*virtus*). In the glorification, the dualism between animating spirit and matter needing animation is brought to an end. The glorified body is the great Synthesis. It is through and through the manifestation of spirit-life, clear of all limitations of space. It is altogether and entirely *Life*. It has power to take volume at its own pleasure (John xx. 19, Luke xxiv. 16), but still in such a way that it shall rule the matter so assumed, and not be ruled by it as an outward limitation. *This is really the root and crux of Calvin's theory*. The glorified body is not matter, but universal power. As such power it works not mechanically, but all it does it does dynamically.

It is with this glorified body, or life, or power, with this great divine and human Synthesis, with this divine-human Person, that the soul of man has communion in the Lord's Supper. Ebrard speaks of the Calvinistic conception of the "glorified corporeity," a conception, he says, to which we must rise, if we are to understand Calvin's theory aright.

To Calvin, the centre of man is life,² and the true substance of Christ on which the life of man is nourished is the life of Christ. It is perfectly clear, then, that the "vivific virtue" of Christ's body signified for Calvin the active power of this life. He would hear of no transfusion of substance, materially considered, but take this crass notion away, and he was ready to allow all that the idea of substance might be found to require. "The fiction of transfusion being removed, it never came into my mind to raise a debate about the term 'substance.' Nor will I ever hesitate to acknowledge, that by the secret virtue of the Holy Spirit, life is infused into us from the substance of His flesh, which, not without reason, is called heavenly food."³ No language could more plainly describe the

¹ *Mercersburg Review*, September, 1850.

² This work, p. 131.

³ *Tracts*, ii. p. 277.

efflux of life which flows dynamically from the body of the Saviour.

This, we believe, is the key to a true understanding of Calvin's theory. By the life-giving virtue or efficacy of Christ's body, he means always the very substance of Christ's life itself under the divine-human form.

Rev. Dr. C. Ryder Smith, in discussing the rival theories of the Atonement, speaks of the third way, the way of the Peace-maker,¹ and we believe that Calvin has discovered the third way, as the peace-maker between the crass conception of the Roman Catholics and ultra-Lutherans on the one side, and the figment of mere spiritualism in the rival theories of the Supper. For Calvin, the body of Christ, in that new order of existence to which it has been advanced by the Resurrection, is no longer under law to Nature as before. It has become all Spirit and Life, having its place, indeed, in heaven, but in such a way as to be capable of reaching forth at once, over all outward local limits, with its inmost substance and force to the souls of His people (and so to their bodies also) in every part of the world. To express all this, he avoids carefully every word that might imply locality or matter, but he insists with all the more emphasis and stress on all that is included in the conception of life in its invisible, dynamic nature. The human nature of Christ is made thus to be the reservoir of a life which flows into it from the divine nature for the use of the race. The vivific virtue which it there comprehends, the true inward substance of His flesh and blood, is conveyed over to us by the operation of the Holy Ghost. And as the result of the whole process, we are so joined to Him as to become flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone. His life reaches into us precisely as the root lives in its branches, and the head in its members, in the world of nature, only under a far more inward and vital form. This, we believe, is what Calvin means by the "substance" of Christ's flesh and blood.

IV. The above discussion serves to remove another objection put forward by Hodge and others, who discover confusion and ambiguity in Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, arising from an attempt to unite artificially two

¹ Ryder Smith, *British Weekly*, April 8th, 1926.

distinct and separate views of the "efficacy and life-giving power of Christ's body."¹ "There are two ways," writes Hodge, "in which this was understood. Some intended by it, not the virtue of Christ's body as flesh and blood, but their virtue as a body broken, and of blood as shed. Others insisted, however, that besides this, there was a vivifying efficacy imparted to the body of Christ by its union with the divine nature, and that by the power of the Holy Ghost the believer in the Lord's Supper and elsewhere received into his soul by faith this mysterious and supernatural influence. This was clearly Calvin's idea, though he often contented himself with the expression of the former of these views."²

Professor Hodge proceeds to quote from Calvin's works passages which voice the latter view. We are already familiar with these. For an illustration of the former teaching he goes to the 23rd Article of the *Consensus Tigurinus* (1549). "When it is said that Christ, by our eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood, feeds our souls through faith by the agency of the Holy Spirit, we are not to understand it as if any mingling or transfusion of substance took place, but that we draw life from the flesh once sacrificed and the blood shed in expiation."³

From this Article it might appear as if what the believer receives in the Lord's Supper is not any supernatural power from the glorified body of Christ in heaven, but the benefits of His death as a sacrifice for sin. Calvin is thus said to vacillate between two views. He continually declares that believers receive the virtue, efficacy or vigour of Christ's body and blood. But at one time, he understands thereby, the virtue of Christ's body as broken and His blood as shed; that is, their sacrificial efficacy.

At another time, he asserts that besides this there was a mysterious virtue in the body of Christ due to the union with the divine nature, which virtue was by the Holy Spirit conveyed to the believer.

The first view was the view of the Zurich Church, and Calvin is supposed to have artificially and ingeniously blended it with the second view, which is derived partly

¹ Hodge, *op. cit.* iii. p. 646. *Mercersburg Review*, September, 1850.

² Hodge, *op. cit.* iii. p. 646.

³ *Tracts*, ii. p. 219, Art. 23.

from the influence of previous modes of thought, partly from the dominant influence of the Lutherans and the desire of getting as near to them as possible, and partly, no doubt, from a too literal interpretation of John vi. 54-58 and Ephes. v. 30.¹ We are here in presence of a very common misapprehension of Calvin's doctrine, and one from which it has suffered from the beginning even up to the present time. Calvin is continually represented as an artful and ingenious mediator, who by skilful language tried to reconcile opposing theories. From what we have already learned of him, however, we refuse to acquiesce in this description. Such intentions could no doubt be accredited to Bucer, but Calvin was not one to consent to such proceedings. Had there been such an obvious contradiction in his teaching he would have been the first to realise it. He had a fine sense for the logical unity of doctrines, and he would not have consented to foist upon his Church a dogma which was in reality two dogmas outwardly joined together which had no inward affinity or connection.

But, as a matter of fact, there was no such dualism in Calvin's doctrine. It has been our contention throughout that the doctrine of Zwingli found its natural development and its full fruition in Calvin's teaching. Zwingli always related the Lord's Supper to the death of Christ. Calvin did the same, but he went deeper. He taught that the real basis of Christ's sacrifice was His life, and that this life was the natural and necessary medium of communion with it for the remission of sins; and when we speak of Christ's life, we mean, of course, that life as we have just expounded Calvin's thought of it in our previous paragraph. "First of all," he says, "we are taught by the Scripture that Christ was from the beginning the living Word of the Father, the fountain and origin of life, from which all things should always receive life. Hence John at one time calls Him the Word of life, and at another time says that in Him was life."²

This is Calvin's clear and consistent testimony, and he urged accordingly on all occasions the *vivific* side of the

¹ Hodge, *Princeton Review*, April, 1848.

² *Institutes*, book iv. chap. 17, para. 8. *Mercersburg Review*, Sept., 1850.

Christian mystery of the Lord's Supper as the proper complement of the sacrificial. From this order of thought he never swerved in the least, and so far from dropping it to please the Swiss, we find that this very order and no other was settled with general consent under his auspices, as a true and right expression of the Reformed faith.

We meet it in all the standard Confessions of this faith in the latter part of the sixteenth century. It is distinctly recognised in the whole Sacramental Controversy of the same period. The assertion of the presence of this supposed antagonism and dualism of view is based, as we have seen, upon a quotation from the *Consensus Tigurinus* (Article 23), but if the supporters of this contention would trouble to read the Exposition of this Article in the First Defence against Westphal they would discover a complete and convincing refutation. "We acknowledge, then, without any equivocation, that the flesh of Christ gives life, not only because we once obtained salvation by it, but because now, while we are made one with Christ, by a sacred union, the same flesh breathes life into us, or, to express it more briefly, because engrafted into the body of Christ by the secret agency of the Holy Spirit, we have life in common with Him. For, from the hidden fountain of the Godhead, life was miraculously infused into the body of Christ, that it might flow from thence to us."¹ This is no reconciling statement of two opposing views. It is the lower view finding its full fruition in the view which Calvin continually and consistently affirmed.

V. One last charge of ambiguity and lack of candour is brought against Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper by those who affirm that he could not seriously have intended to assert that believers could enjoy communion with Christ's glorified body, as it was his constant contention that the Old Testament saints had the same communion with Christ which it is the privilege of believers to enjoy now.

This difficulty has been felt by many. Julius Müller has clearly stated it.² "It is difficult to see this point, if in the Holy Supper a vitalising power is said to come out of the glorified flesh of Christ into those who enjoy the signs.

¹ *Tracts*, ii. p. 238.

² J. Müller, *op. cit.* p. 422.

It is very easy to see, on the contrary, if that fellowship means nothing save an emotion of the mind which is awakened by living faith and lifted to heaven. But that this is totally foreign to Calvin's view follows from what he says in the writing against Hesshuss.¹ We must, therefore, confess that this view of Calvin is very obscure and complex. Nevertheless, it has to be remembered that it was the trend of that time to magnify the presence of Christ and of the divine grace in the Old Testament, and to depreciate the benefits and gifts of the New."

"This view is perfectly intelligible," says the *Princeton Review*, "if the virtue of Christ's flesh and blood, which we receive in the Lord's Supper, is its virtue as a sacrifice; because He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. But if the virtue in question is a mysterious power due to the hypostatical union flowing from Christ's body in heaven, it must be a benefit peculiar to believers since the Incarnation. It is impossible that those living before the Advent could partake of Christ's body in this sense, because it did not then exist. It had not as yet been assumed into union with the divine nature."² Here again we are in presence of those who would reduce Calvin's view to a mere partaking by the believer in the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice. But to all who have made a careful study of Calvin's theory, it is apparent that here we have to deal with no incidental or extraneous fancy on the part of the great Reformer. On the contrary, we have before us a broad, palpable idea, which is almost never out of sight in the discussion of the sacramental question, and which Calvin himself held to be of vital consequence to his whole system. That he held and taught always a real union on the part of believers with the human nature or life of Christ is just as plain as it is that he taught the doctrine of election. We also know that Calvin himself had this objection to his doctrine distinctly before his mind, and yet he persisted in affirming the alleged ambiguous statement.

In his *Commentary to I. Cors. x.* 1-4, he raises the subject plumply. "Inasmuch as we now in the supper eat the

¹ *Tracts*, ii. p. 533.

² Hodge, *Princeton Review*, April, 1848. *Mercersburg Review*, September, 1850.

Body of Christ, and drink His blood, how could the Jews have partaken of the same meat and drink, when there was yet no flesh of Christ which they might eat? "

To this he replies that they actually partook of the vital power of the body that afterwards appeared, the Holy Ghost so working that the "flesh of Christ, though not yet created, became in them efficacious." At the same time, he allows a material difference in their mode of participation as compared with ours. "In our time the manducation is substantial, which it could not be then, *i.e.*, Christ feeds us with His own flesh slain for us and appointed unto us for meat, and we draw thence life." This may be hard to understand, but could it be made more apparent that for Calvin at least the case of the Old Testament saints formed no barrier to the idea of a real communion with the proper human life of the Redeemer in the mystery of the Lord's Supper?

Westphal in fact tried to turn the difficulty to account against him, just as it is now pressed by modern critics with an opposite effect. "Christ had not yet assumed flesh," said Westphal. "The Fathers, then, could partake of His body only in figure, and so by making their participation parallel to ours, you in fact sink this last to a mere figure too, notwithstanding all your fine talk." "But if he had any candour," retorts Calvin, "he would notice how this difficulty has been solved by me in my Commentary, where I say that the mode of eating for the Fathers was different from ours, inasmuch as the manducation is now substantial, which it could not be then; namely, as Christ feeds us with His flesh sacrificed for us, that we may draw life from its substance. As the lamb is said to have been slain from the foundation of the world, so it was necessary for the Fathers under the Law to seek spiritual nourishment from the flesh and blood, which we now enjoy more richly, not only as regards a fuller measure of revelation, but because the flesh once offered in sacrifice, is daily extended to us for fruition. When therefore Westphal infers that we equal the figure to the truth, it only shows his too arrogant malice, since he knows well enough that I mention distinct degrees" (*Tracts* ii. p. 293).

"I always profess," he says in another place, "that the

exhibition of Christ under the Law is less rich and full than it is now, and I add also that we are now fed substantially on the flesh of Christ, which exerted its virtue in the case of the Fathers before it was actually created. This more clearly establishes Westphal's dishonesty in charging us with confounding degrees, which, as is proper, I am careful to distinguish" (*Tracts* ii. p. 393).

CONCLUSION

Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper is no isolated or merely occasional utterance in his theological studies and system. His writings are full of it, from the First Edition of his *Institutes* to the last Tract he ever published, and it is presented always as an article not of secondary, but of primary and fundamental interest, which it lay near his heart to have rightly understood. He spares no pains to explain and define it. He comes upon it from all sides, and considers it under all imaginable aspects, sometimes in the form of direct, positive statement and discussion, at other times polemically or apologetically, over against objections and cavils urged against it by friends and foes. And still, through all this multitudinous and diversified presentation, the doctrine remains from first to last one and the same, always in harmony with itself, and true to its original type or law. It is logically more clear than Luther's view or that of Zwingli. Calvin has written much on the Lord's Supper, and over and over again, in all forms of expression and explanation, he tells us that Christ's body is indeed locally in heaven only, and in no sense included in the elements; that Christ can be apprehended by faith only, and not at all by the hands and lips; that nothing is to be imagined like a transfusion or intromission of the particles of His body, materially considered, into our persons. On the other hand, he asserts strongly that our communion with Christ, by the power of the Holy Ghost, involves a real participation—not in His doctrine merely, not in his promises merely, not in the sensible manifestations of His love merely, not in His righteousness and merit merely, not in the gifts and endowments of His Spirit merely, but in His own true, substantial life itself;

and this, not as comprehended in His divine nature merely, but most immediately and peculiarly as embodied in His Humanity itself, for us men and our salvation. The Word became Flesh, according to Calvin, for the purpose not of simply effecting a salvation that might be available for men in an outward way, but to open a fountain of life in our nature itself that might thenceforward continue to flow over to other men, as a vivific stream, to the end of time. The flesh of Christ, then, or His Humanity, forms the medium, and the *only medium*, by which it is possible for us to be inserted into His life. To have part in Him at all, we must be joined to Him in the flesh, and this not by the bond of our common relationship to Adam, but by the force of a direct implantation through the Spirit, into the Person or life of Christ Himself." ¹

Calvin signed the Augsburg Confession. He stood in open and acknowledged agreement with Melancthon. He solemnly declared time after time that he allowed the *fact* of the sacramental mystery as contended for by Luther, and differed from him only as to the *mode* of its accomplishment. Every contrary representation made against him by Westphal he proclaimed a slander and a lie. It is our contention, then, that his view has close kinship to the teaching of these leaders of the German Reformation, and that in his doctrine we have Zwingli's teaching carried to its natural completion and fruition.

"I have gone over the *Institutes* of Calvin, as well as all his other writings in which he treats of the Eucharist," says Leibnitz, "and have made from them such extracts as prove that this author has seriously, constantly, and strongly inculcated the real and substantial participation of the body of our Lord, and when he denies the real presence, he is to be understood undoubtedly as speaking only of a dimensional presence." ²

"It is perfectly plain," says Bretschneider, "that Calvin's theory includes what with Luther was the main object, namely, the true, full participation of Christ's body to the strengthening and quickening of the soul; and that the question as to whether this takes place under the bread or

¹ *Mercersburg Review*, September, 1850.

² Leibnitz, *Pensées*, second edition, p. 106.

along with the bread, by the mouth or by the soul, does not touch the substance of the case. For, unless we conceive of the body of Christ as something sensible, and thus allow a Capernaïtic eating, the oral participation must become at last nothing else than a participation through the soul, and it is not necessary that the Lord's spiritual body should be taken in by the mouth, in order to be effectual upon the soul." ¹

According to Schleiermacher, the Calvinist idea of the Lord's Supper is concerned not indeed with the elements as such, but with the act of eating and drinking. It is not simply a spiritual enjoyment of Christ, but a real presence of His body and blood to be had nowhere else (*die nirgend sonst zu habende wirkliche Gegenwart seines Leibes und Blutes*). Both views, the Lutheran and the Calvinist, he tells us, acknowledged a presence of Christ's body and blood.

It will hardly be pretended that such a theologian as Schleiermacher has mistaken the sense of Calvin in this matter. It deserves to be noted besides, that this great master of ratiocination, with all his cool and free spirit of theological enquiry, finds no incongruity or contradiction whatever in the Calvinist theory. He prefers it on the whole to that of Luther, although he thinks the truth may require some higher, middle theory, in which both at last shall be reconciled and made complete.²

¹ Bretschneider, *Handbuch der Dogmatik*, p. 202 f.

² Schleiermacher, *Der Christliche Glaube*, p. 140.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SOURCE OF CALVIN'S DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

WAS RATRAMNUS THE PRECURSOR OF CALVIN'S DOCTRINE ?

WE have discussed Calvin's theory of the Lord's Supper in its relation to the teaching of Luther and Zwingli. We now ask, What place does the doctrine of Calvin occupy in the history of dogma ?

In Doumergue's *Life of Calvin*, there is an interesting section, whose purpose is to show that the spiritual predecessor of Calvin was Ratramnus, a priest of Corbie, a native of Picardy, who wrote a treatise, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, in the reign of Charles the Bald, about the middle of the ninth century.¹

Professor Choisy connects Calvin and Ratramnus,² and Joseph Martin, in a work entitled *Ratramne-une conception de la cène au neuvième siècle*, acclaims Ratramnus as the common ancestor of the Protestant, Eucharistic doctrine, as Radbertus was the father of the Roman Catholic dogma.³

Not much is known of the history of Ratramnus. It is certain, however, that he did not die before 869. It is probable that he was of French origin, and was a member of the order of the Benedictines. He was distinguished for his learning, and was thought worthy of the highest honours. We do not know for certain if he always remained at Corbie. What is important is, that Ratramnus was a man, pious and intelligent, who enjoyed a reputation that

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 364.

² Professor Choisy, *Pascasius Radbertus*, Montauban, 1888.

³ Martin, Thesis : *Ratramne*, 1891.

brought him the friendship of men of letters. Such a man could not fail to take a large part in the theological discussions of his age. He seems to have been engaged chiefly in opposing the ideas of Radbertus, and he composed a considerable work on the dogma of the Virgin Birth, as also on the doctrine of predestination, where he favoured the teaching of Augustine.¹

This connection with Augustine is interesting, as Calvin continually claimed that his teaching on the Lord's Supper was in harmony with his.²

In Ratramnus' day Augustine's teaching was the point of departure for an earnest reaction against the ideas of Pelagius, and the foundation of Pelagianism was nothing else than the doctrine of works, which later became the basis of the Roman Catholic belief. From this point of view, it is valuable to find in Ratramnus ideas analogous to those of Augustine; that is, contrary to the tendencies of the spirit of Catholicism. The testimony of critics the least suspect proves that the works of Ratramnus are solidly based. "We have no dogmatic work of this time whose doctrine is more convincingly established."³

Sufficient has been said to show that Ratramnus was an epoch point in the preparation for the Reformed doctrine. The solidity of his reasoning and his desire to remain true to the Gospel records and the testimony of the Fathers is very evident. But there was more than that.

His work on the Supper, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, in itself gives him a serious title to recognition.

Amongst all the discussions in which the theologians of the ninth century took part, the most important was that of the Eucharist. It was raised by Radbertus, monk of Corbie. This monk wrote in 831 a work on the Supper, *Liber de corpore et sanguine Domini*. His book, where the doctrine of the material presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper was energetically formulated and defended, became well known, and was brought to the attention of Charles

¹ Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 462. Bonifas, *Histoire des dogmes*, ii. p. 403.

² Beckmann, J. *Die Sakramentslehre Calvins in ihren Beziehungen zu Augustin*, Tübingen, 1926.

³ *The Literary History of France*, v. p. 34. Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 365.

the Bald, who was greatly interested in theological questions. Desirous of being better informed on the subject, Charles asked Ratramnus to expound the true theory of the Supper. Ratramnus then wrote his book, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*. This work of Ratramnus had a curious history. It remained unnoticed from the tenth to the twelfth century. It does not seem to have played a great rôle even in the Eucharistic dispute of the eleventh century.

Berengar¹ knew it, but ascribed it to John Scotus. In 1526 Jean Fisher uses it against Oekolampadius.² From that time it gradually attained great publicity. The Protestants understood the importance of it, and they printed it in numerous editions. It appeared in Cologne in 1532, and with a preface by Leo Juda at Geneva in 1541.

We have not been able to find any reference to it in Calvin's works, but such a reader as he could not be ignorant of it. It was translated by Bishop Ridley in 1549. In 1686, Hopkins, Canon of Westminster, published a dissertation, where he showed that the doctrine of Ratramnus was the doctrine of the Church of England.

The Roman Catholic theologians have always been greatly embarrassed by it. They even invented a sect called Stercoranistes, whose excesses, they affirmed, Ratramnus had written to refute. This sect, according to Du Perron, were ultra-realists,³ but there is no trace of the existence of such a sect in the times of Ratramnus. Their efforts were in vain, and the fact remains that the book was neither corrupted nor altered, that it is by Ratramnus, and that the belief which the author says is Catholic is contrary to the dogma of the real presence and of transubstantiation.⁴

Now what was the precise point of debate which furnished to Ratramnus the occasion for the publishing of his work? In his preface to the King, Ratramnus defines the two theories between which he has to choose.

"Your Majesty enquires :

"1st. Whether the body and blood of Christ, which in the Church is taken by the mouth of the faithful, is made such in mystery or in external reality ; that is, whether it

¹ Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 501.

² Martin, *op. cit.* p. 17.

³ Martin, p. 39.

⁴ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 365.

contains anything hidden which is open only to the eyes of faith, or whether, without the veil of any mystery, the sight of the body outwardly sees that which the vision of the mind inwardly beholds, so that all that is done is thereby manifested and seen.

"2nd. Whether it is that body itself, which was born of Mary and suffered and died, and was buried, which rose again and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father" (para. 5).

Here, it seems, are two doctrines clearly opposed—the realist-materialist doctrine and the realist-spiritualist doctrine.

Dealing with the *first question*—whether the Lord's Supper contains a mystery which only faith can recognise—Ratramnus evidently thinks that in the Lord's Supper there is no corporal manducation. The bread, he maintains, remains externally what it is, but inwardly considered, it is for faith, something higher, heavenly and divine, which is seen and recognised and received and eaten only by the believing soul (para. 9). There occurs, indeed, a change into something better (*commutatio in melius*), but this is to be understood spiritually and figuratively. What appears *outwardly* to our senses is the bread and wine without change.

What appears *inwardly* to the soul of the believer is a divine and heavenly thing, the body and blood of Jesus Christ. From all this Ratramnus concludes that the bread and wine are only simple *figures* of the body and blood of Jesus Christ (para. 10).

He explains what he means by figure. "It is a kind of shade which shows as under a veil what it encloses" (para. 7).

He gives as an example the Word of Christ, "I am the bread of life which came from Heaven." "I am the true vine; ye are the branches."

To believe that in the Sacrament nothing is to be taken figuratively, is to deprive faith of its effective rôle. It can do nothing there, since there is nothing spiritual in the transaction; but all is to be taken in a corporal manner.

He insists on the fact that if the bread and wine were really the body and blood of Jesus Christ, there would be

a *material* change in the substance of the bread and wine, while there is none. For it would be absurd to take the bread for flesh and to call the wine blood.

This, however, does not mean that there is no change. It is, on the contrary, implied in the declaration of Jesus Christ, "Take, eat, this is My body; take, drink, this is My blood of the New Testament."

But this change is made *figuratively*, because that "under the veil of the material bread and of the material wine there is the spiritual body and blood of Christ" (para. 16). The body and blood of Christ enclosed in the Lord's Supper are only creatures subject to change and to corruption, if one stops at the outside. But if one regards the virtue of the mystery, they are a principle of life which gives immortality to those that partake of them (paras. 18 and 19).

Ratramnus makes much of John vi. "Christ said to His disciples who received His words, not with unbelief but with faith, though they did not understand them, 'Does this offend you? Does this make you stumble? What, then, if you should see the Son of Man ascending where He was before?' as though to say, 'Think not that My flesh or My blood is to be corporeally eaten or drunk by you, for, after My resurrection, ye shall see Me ascend into heaven with the completeness of My body and blood.'"

Finally, Ratramnus quotes this word of John, "Jesus said, 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth. The flesh profiteth nothing,' " and he draws the conclusion, "In this mystery of the body and blood, it is a spiritual efficacy (*spiritualis operatio*), which gives life, without which efficacy these mysteries are useless, because they can only nourish the body, and not the soul" (para. 31).

One could multiply quotations, but all go to prove that the theory of Ratramnus is spiritual. He sums it up in this declaration, "From all that has so far been said, it has been shown that the body and blood of Christ, which are received by the mouth of the faithful in the Church, are figures in respect of visible nature (*speciem*); but in respect of invisible substance, that is, the power of the divine Word, they are really the body and blood of Christ. There is then a body of Christ in the Supper, but

interius, not *exterius*, in *mysterio*, not in *veritate*. It is present *spiritualiter*, not *corporaliter*. This is the gist of Ratramnus' answer to the first question, despite the occasional use of such terms as *converti*, *confici*, etc.¹

The second question propounded to Ratramnus, "Whether it is that body which was born of Mary; suffered and died and was buried, which rose again and ascended into heaven," this question Ratramnus answers in the negative.

After commenting on the testimonies of several of the Fathers, he concludes that there is a great difference between the body with which Christ bore His sufferings and the body which believers celebrate in the mystery of the Supper. "For," says he, "this bread and this drink are the body and the blood of Jesus Christ, not in regard to what they show, but in regard to what they communicate . . . spiritually, a substance of *life*."

The blood which believers drink, and His body which they eat, are one thing in kind and another thing in meaning; one thing, in that they nourish the body like corporal food, and another thing, in that they nourish the soul with a nourishment to eternal life.

Ratramnus insists that the historic body of Christ cannot in any fashion be in the Supper, and he gives *three* reasons for this impossibility.

1st. After the resurrection, Christ's historic body is imperishable and eternal.

2nd. After the resurrection, the historic body of Christ is still visible and tangible.

3rd. The historic body is true God and true Man, and one could not grant these attributes to Him who is in the Eucharist.

What, then, according to Ratramnus, does the Lord's Supper bestow? The answer can only be—The Invisible Bread, the Spirit of Christ, the Power of the Logos (paras. 22, 26, 44 ff.). Christ the Word is spiritually imparted to us through the mystic form of the Sacrament.

"This," says Seeberg, "is the Augustinian view adapted to meet the statement of the problem by Radbertus. The religious element which it contains, the spiritual fellowship

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* ii. p. 38.

of Christ, cannot be overlooked. Perhaps Ratramnus would have been able to furnish an even more lucid exposition if the problem had not been forced upon him from without, and the direction of his thought thus determined by others for him." ¹

According to Loofs, the view of Ratramnus may be characterised as *realistisch-dynamisch*.²

In being the first to give a scientific formula to the materialist theory of the Lord's Supper, Pascasius Radbertus has acquired the right of being considered as the father of the Roman Catholic conception.

In the same way, in expounding for the first time the *realist-spiritualist* doctrine, Ratramnus deserves to be called the father of the Protestant conception. If his ideas did not triumph in the ninth century, they have nevertheless convinced authoritative representatives. Berengar, Bernard of Clairvaux, Wicklif connect him with the Reformation.

Of this fact Martin ³ and Doumergue supply two proofs.

1st. That the doctrine of Ratramnus has directly influenced the doctrine of the Church of England.

2nd. That the doctrine of Ratramnus is found in the Reformers of the sixteenth century, and especially in Calvin.

For the first of these proofs there are reliable witnesses. Hopkins, Canon of Westminster, who wrote a long introduction to an Edition of the book of Ratramnus, which he published, makes several important declarations on the subject.⁴ "We acknowledge," he says, "the reality of the presence of the body and blood in the Eucharist in the same way as Ratramnus, and we reject with this writer the same errors which the Roman Church had acknowledged as articles of faith. . . . The majority of the decisions of our Church are found in this little book, if not in express terms, at least by logical deductions. Perhaps even our Reformers had more regard to the judgment of Ratramnus on this subject than any of the neighbouring Churches. Bishop Ridley, who was one of the principal compilers of our liturgy and of our Confession of faith in the

¹ Seeberg, *op. cit.* ii. p. 38.

² Loofs, *op. cit.* p. 472

³ Martin, *Ratramne*, p. 55. Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 365 f.

⁴ Hopkins, *Ratramnus or Bertram* (1688), p. 164 f.

reign of Edward VI., had so great an esteem for Ratramnus and his works that in his defence before the Commissioners of Queen Mary at Oxford he declares that he was driven by the reading of this work to correct by the Scriptures and the Fathers the old opinion on the real presence of the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. He confesses that by this means he discovered the errors of the Church at Rome. Also, he makes the greatest eulogium of Ratramnus, and borrows from his book, without concealment, the arguments necessary for his own theory. Dr. Burnet confirms this information in his *History of the Reformation*.¹ He recounts that after Ridley had read Ratramnus, he concluded that transubstantiation was not one of the ancient dogmas of the Church, and that it had not been admitted till after the age of Ratramnus. Dr. Burnet also affirms that Ridley communicated his thought to Cranmer, and that they both examined Ratramnus' work with extraordinary care. Dr. Burnet is thus right in holding that the doctrine of Ratramnus was the teaching embraced by the English Church." "But that is not to say," continues Hopkins, "that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is only a commemoration, since, according to our principles, it is an efficacious mystery, accompanied by a divine and spiritual virtue, which renders the consecrated elements truly, though mystically, the body and the blood of Christ, and communicates to us the rich fruits and advantages of Christ's death. Our doctrine is the doctrine of Ratramnus in both parts of his work."²

"This testimony of Hopkins becomes especially interesting," says Martin, "when we remember the close relation which exists between the Reformation of the English Church and that of which Calvin was the head. On the question of the Supper, as on many others, the doctrines of the English Church correspond to the Calvinist doctrine. That is to say, Ratramnus was the precursor of Calvin."³

¹ Burnet, *History of the Reformation of the Church of England*, London, 1682.

² Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 165. Martin, *op. cit.* p. 55. Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 366.

³ Martin, *op. cit.* p. 59.

We do not need to push the comparison further.

Ratramnus saw in the Supper a ceremony destined to recall to Christians the expiatory sacrifice of Christ. He also saw that the believer receives, in communicating, a spiritual nourishment, but he saw more than that. He affirmed with Luther that the body and blood of Christ are truly present in the Sacrament. Only he went less far than Luther. He asserted that this presence had only a spiritual character. He held himself between the two extremes. He observed the same limits as Calvin. He admitted with Radbertus that the Sacrament is at once a visible sign and an invisible truth; but while Radbertus believed that it was the historic body and blood of Jesus Christ, Ratramnus declared it immaterial and dynamic, the Power of the Logos.

We find again in Calvin his distinction between the visible and material element, which consists in the signs of the bread and wine, and the invisible and spiritual, which is the body of Christ. It is always the same bread and the same wine, not changing in substance after consecration, but becoming the evident signs of the communication of the spiritual body and blood of Christ. It is a real, true presence, but spiritual.

We think, therefore, that we have sufficiently demonstrated the intimate relation between the doctrines of Ratramnus and Calvin, and we conclude with a quotation from Doumergue which confirms our thesis.

"One understands how a Catholic has said, 'To quote Ratramnus, is to show that the heresy of Calvin is not new.' The doctrine of Ratramnus is placed in a time, at an equal distance between Paul and Calvin, between the early Church and the Reformation, at that unique moment when Evangelical Christianity suffered a secular eclipse. Calvin relit the torch which Ratramnus so firmly held. The Protestantism of Calvin is the Christianity of the true Evangelical tradition. Your fathers, Where are they? There!"¹

¹ Doumergue, *op. cit.* v. p. 367.

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